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THE
HIERARCHICAL DESPOTISM.

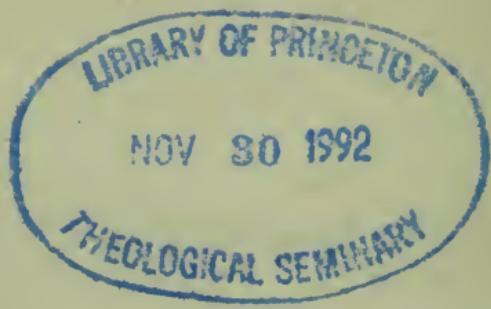
SOPHISMS
OF THE
APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION
EXAMINED AND REFUTED
BY
THE WORD OF GOD.

LECTURE IV.

BY ✓
REV. GEORGE B. CHEEVER.

NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY SAXTON & MILES,
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## INTRODUCTION.

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It was a declaration of Milton, worthy to be written in every language in the world, that “to us nothing can be catholic or universal in religion, but what the Scripture teaches ; WHATSOEVER WITHOUT SCRIPTURE PLEADS TO BE UNIVERSAL IN THE CHURCH, IN BEING UNIVERSAL, IS BUT THE MORE SCHISMATICAL.” This principle every generous Protestant will act upon, in argument as well as in practice.

It may be, however, that in regard to this lecture some may think the author not sufficiently guarded, in developing the absolute and entire freedom of the New Testament from any commanded form as to church government and ministerial ordination. I have endeavored simply, and without prejudice, to follow what is written in the Word of God, and to mark what is *not* written there, which nevertheless the hierarchical and spiritual despotism seeks to enforce upon the conscience. The apostolical successionists have made out of ordination by the laying on of the hands of a diocesan bishop a sacramental mystery as inscrutable and powerful as any piece of Indian or Oriental magic. I have shown that there is not one passage in the New Testament, in which the laying on of hands is mentioned as a ceremony accompanying introduction into the Christian ministry. The ceremony itself is to be regarded as suitable, becoming, and solemn ; and if the Christian church agree to adopt it in the appointment of her ministers, it is a beautiful and appropriate rite. But it is not essential, not commanded in Scripture. It cannot be proved that it was ever used by the Apostles in the appointment of elders

in the churches. I have stated this so strongly, that some persons, accustomed to regard this ceremony as essential to ministerial ordination, may deem that I have gone too far. I would merely beg that they closely examine the Scriptures on this point, before they decide.

In considering the wickedness of the exclusive and intolerant spirit of Episcopacy, it is important to remember that we are in the nineteenth century of the publication and profession of the Christian religion. We are in the midst, also, of an age of MISSIONS, or what we had hoped would prove such, in which the blessed and glorious ministration of the Spirit abroad might be expected to check and put to shame such intolerant enforcement of a religion of forms at home. As a nation, also, we are sprung from the loins of an ancestry, who resisted, even to the death, that same religious intolerance, that same arrogance of formalism, and who also suffered from it even to the death. We are in a country, likewise, where we have proclaimed and believed that the principles of religious liberty were known and acted on in such perfection of purity as never any people in any age of the world have given to their development. Our position, our parentage, our discipline, our government, our institutions, all God's great and gracious providences with us, all the flood of light and dearly purchased experience he hath poured out upon us, should combine to make us ashamed of an exhibition of religious formalism and intolerance, which might have been expected in the old corrupt, papistical, monarchical establishments of Europe, but which is as incongruous here as darkness is with light, and just as inconsistent, everywhere, with the spirit of the gospel. Our Episcopal friends will, if they are at all candid, pardon our severity; if they *will* give, they *must* also expect to receive.

# SOPHISMS OF THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

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## NATURE OF THE ARGUMENT

### SIMPLICITY AND POWER OF THE APPEAL TO SCRIPTURE.

I NEED make no apology for going straight to the Scriptures to find divine truth and divine obligation. Whatever is binding upon us as Christians, whatever is essential to a Christian church, must be recorded there; if it be not there, the assumption of divine right is false. The whole fabric of *jure divino* Episcopacy is built upon sophisms, which not only find no support in the Scriptures, but are contradicted therein. If you knock away these sophisms the fabric falls. And hence the manifest unwillingness of Episcopalians, who assume the divine right of their order, to come to the Scriptures, point by point, and examine texts in their simple, literal construction. Hence their love of

the Fathers, and their appeal to them as umpires ; an appeal the more confident in proportion to the distance between them and the Apostles, and the manifest increase of the corruptions of Christianity. Who are the Fathers ? I shall answer in the striking language of Milton, “ Whatever time, or the heedless hand of blind chance hath drawn from old to this present, in her huge drag-net, whether fish or sea-weed, shell or shrubs, unpicked, unchosen, those are the Fathers.” Of what value is an appeal to them ? Let their own grave discussion, how it may be lawful to use falsehood as a medicine for the advantage of those who require such a method, determine. It is among these volumes, full of interpolations, forgeries, and lying, pious frauds, that the advocates of prelatical Episcopacy love to hide themselves ; it is by the light of such interpreters that they wish to investigate the Holy Scriptures. Thus they mingle their controversy with heterogeneous matter ; they play about in the bogs and morasses of the Fathers and the standards of the churches, where the questions are endless, the paths interminable ; thus they encompass themselves with what Milton well calls “ a *fog of witnesses.*”

I am sometimes reminded, by the course of this controversy, of the experience of the celebrated Mr. Scrope in fishing for salmon in the river Tweed. He had one day a bite from a fish so large and obstinate, that he found his line would not have strength to bring him to, if he attempted it ; and his only resource was either to lose his spoil, or to plunge into the stream, and wading, running, floundering, at the risk of his life, to follow him and tire him out. And so the indefatigable sportsman

went, over cascades and rocks, through deep water and shallow, down the stream for miles, the greater part of a sportsman's day, till the fish gave in, and the prize was secured by a protracted chase, which would have been lost at the outset by an attempt to bring him to the bank at the first point in the conflict.

Just so with this controversy ; if you engage in it anywhere out of the Scriptures, you will have to be dragged through swamps and quagmires, over cascades and precipices ; and if you secure your salmon, it will have to be done almost at the risk of your life, and with great patience of contradiction. You will have to flounder

O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense or rare,  
through the dark ages, and the canon law, and the church standards, and the chaos of the Fathers, where

At length a universal hubbub wild  
Of stunning sounds, and voices all confused,  
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults the ear  
With loudest vehemence.

Thither, to continue the illustration from Milton, the undaunted *jure divino* controversialist plies his way ;

Undaunted to meet there whatever power  
Or spirit of the nethermost abyss  
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask  
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies,  
Bordering on light.

For this is the most definite question you can ask of the Fathers, *which way the nearest coast of darkness lies, bordering on light?* And here, in this dim twilight,

FOURTH LECTURE.

where the shades of darkness from the thickening corruptions of Christianity begin to gather, are the outposts of diocesan episcopacy, here are its sentinels, here is its camp, here, outside the limits of Apostolical Christianity, is its armory, here are its weapons of defence and aggrandizement, and here its youthful students exercise that discipline in prelatical ecclesiastical history, which accustoms them to put tradition before the Bible, to judge and interpret the Bible by tradition, and under cover of a breastwork of patristical tradition to come to those texts that are against them. But the true Biblical student loves to take his stand-point in the Bible itself. Here we take our stand-point, and from this point, and not from the light of corrupt ages, we survey and detect the sophisms, on which the fabric of episcopal exclusiveness is built. It is in this way that I mean to carry on my argument, in showing, one by one, the nature of these sophisms, and applying to them, for this purpose, the infallible text of the Sacred Scriptures in their simple, common sense construction.

In other words, I shall put the pretensions of diocesan episcopacy, one by one, into the crucible of the Word of God, and if they come out gold, well and good, we will all use them; but if they come out dross, we will throw them away. And in this process, let one thing be guarded against, and that is, the acceptance of glosses or constructions *put upon* passages of Scripture, which do not grow out of them, cannot be found in them. For example, Paul says to Timothy, in his second epistle, after exhorting him to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, “And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same

commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." The passage refers manifestly to the instructing of teachers in the truths of the gospel, for their work. There is neither word nor intimation in regard to ordination, or the power of ordination in it, much less as to any succession of such power. The course of the argument stops at teaching, not at ordaining. It is not said, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to *ordain* others also, but, to *teach* others also. Now, here would be a gloss or construction forced upon the passage, which it will not bear, if you attempt to argue from it the power of ordination; much more absurd is it, if you argue that Timothy alone had that power, and was here commanded to commit it to others, that they in their turn might ordain others also. I might just as well argue from Timothy iv. 13, that the cloak which Paul left at Troas was a peculiar surplice, necessary to be used in ordaining elders, and that one of the books he sent for was a church liturgy, prepared by the Saviour, out of which Paul must read the ordinal service. Indeed there is almost nothing which might not be proved from Scripture, were we permitted to impress upon it our own foreign constructions, instead of simply drawing from it the meaning contained in it.

You have all heard of constructive treason, or making a man guilty of treason by putting such a construction on the statute as it was never intended to bear. Now there is such a thing as making a constructive episcopacy, inasmuch as no form of diocesan episcopacy is to be found in the Scriptures, by putting thus upon certain passages a construction which they

will not bear, and evidently were never intended to bear. Suppositions and conjectural assumptions are made to do the work, which plain Scriptural texts and the whole tenor of the Scriptures refuse to accomplish. The prelatical successionists use the word of God like dishonest players with loaded dice. Just so with the advocates of episcopacy by divine right, in the artificial, forced use they make of texts of Scripture. Their dice are loaded.

SOPHISM FIRST. CONSTRUCTION FORCED UPON THE COMMISSION OF THE DISCIPLES IN MATTHEW XXVIII. 19.

(I.) The first sophism to be exposed is in the construction forced upon the commission of the Apostles. The advocates of prelatical episcopacy begin with the assertion that the commission to preach was restricted to the Apostles, and, by a perfectly gratuitous unauthorized inference, to those whom the Apostles should ordain with the same commission. Now it happens that in that commission there is not one word said about ordaining others, nor any power given so to do. If, therefore, you restrict the commission to preach simply to the Apostles, you must also show some other passage empowering them as plainly to commission others, or you can have no succession at all. The commission to preach is a totally different thing from a commission to appoint preachers; it no more implies the authority to appoint others, or to exclude others, than the commission of Attorney-general of the United States implies the authority to appoint all the members of the legal profession, and to exclude all others from

the practice of the law. Inferences of this kind are not admissible ; but if they were, then we should with the same right infer that all to whom the Apostles preached, would and did, in receiving the gospel, receive therewith the commission to preach the gospel.

But we need not resort to inferences. From a strict and minute comparison of the Evangelists, it is clear, first, that this commission to preach the gospel was a thing separate from the apostolic commission, it was not given to constitute apostles. This is manifest from the fact that Thomas was not present with the other disciples, when the commission to preach the gospel was given them. The Apostles had had this commission before ; it was a part of their apostolic office ; but it was not restricted to them, and it was now given to others besides them. A minute examination of the Evangelists, I say, demonstrates this. There were other disciples besides the Apostles present, when our Lord said to the disciples, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. There were, especially, the two disciples who had walked to Emmaus, whose understandings the Lord had opened, and to whom he had expounded, in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself. To these men, as well as to the eleven, the Lord addressed the commission to preach the gospel. But besides these, there were others with them, to and with whom, while they spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst, and said unto them, unto the disciples there assembled, Peace be unto you : as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost. And he opened their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures. Moreover,

#### FOURTH LECTURE.

if you take the account of this commission in Matthew alone, it is evident that there were other disciples to whom it was addressed besides the eleven ; the “ some who doubted” were certainly in addition to the eleven ; besides, there were those whom the Lord had appointed to meet him in that mountain, and among them, doubtless, were those hundred and twenty disciples, whom we find immediately on their return from this meeting, gathered with Peter and the other apostles. There were all those men to whom Peter refers, and whom he describes in Acts i. 21, 22, “ men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us.” These are the men to whom the Lord Jesus, in giving his last commission, said (Luke xxiv. 48,) Ye are witnesses of these things. To these men, as well as to the Apostles, was the commission in Matt. xxviii. 19, addressed. The argument on this point, from a comparison of the Evangelists and the Acts of the Apostles, cannot be refuted.

#### SECOND LINE OF ARGUMENT.

But even if this were less clear, there is another line of argument, which overturns the doctrine of the apostolical succession from its foundation, which is the argument drawn from the appointment of the seventy. He must have hardihood indeed who should assert that these seventy were not sent out with a commission to preach the gospel. He that heareth you, said Christ, heareth me. And he must have equal hardihood, who should say that this commission was ever taken back.

It was confirmed, as is manifest from Luke x. 19 ; and these seventy, as is manifest from Acts i. 21, 22, were all present when our Lord's last commission was given, which commission, if it was given to the Apostles, was given also to them. Whether it were or were not, they were already preachers of the gospel, commissioned by Christ, and remained such to the end of life. And if our blessed Lord said to any of his ministers, he said to all, I am with you always, even to the end of the world ; to the end of the world *with all who preach the gospel.* He could not mean to restrict this promise to those preachers then before him, for they would not live to the end of the world ; he does not restrict it to those whom these persons should ordain, for he here gives them no commission to ordain others, but to preach to others ; he says no syllable about ordination, nor hints at it ; but he does say, I am with all that preach my gospel to the end of time. The question how they are to become preachers, is not even remotely mingled with this commission, nor involved in it ; it had been settled long ago, when God said, "I will pour out my Spirit upon your children, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, and even your servants and handmaidens shall prophecy." And what unparalleled absurdity to suppose that our Lord was here involving ordination by apostles as the only succession of this ministry, when his own blessed Spirit was already hovering over Jerusalem to make a hundred and twenty preachers at once, as the Spirit gave them utterance, preachers who never should have, as they never should need, any other ordination ! What absurdity, when in the very terms of the com-

mission he had said that not those whom the Apostles should ordain should be preachers, but those who should believe in the Apostles' preaching ; not a word of any duty to appoint other preachers, but simply, Preach the gospel to every creature. "And then signs shall follow," not them who are ordained, but "*them who believe*. In my name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues." Speak what ? The gospel of Christ. They shall preach the gospel, and preach it too with miraculous power, not, if they are ordained, but simply, if they believe. I would not trust that man to interpret the simplest text of Scripture, who can assert, in the face of all this, that the promise of Christ was based upon the condition of ordination by the apostles ; a condition not only not hinted at, but absolutely false and impossible, as is evident both from the context and the preceding and succeeding history.

## THIRD LINE OF ARGUMENT.

There is another passage, which sheds a striking light upon our argument, a light the more powerful for being incidental. It is in Luke ix. 59, 60. Our Lord had commanded a certain individual to follow him. It was an authoritative command of discipleship. "Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead ; but go thou, and PREACH THE KINGDOM OF GOD !" Now according to the hypothesis of prelatical episcopacy our Blessed Lord must have said to the Apostles, My lord bishops, here is work for you to do ; take this man and ordain him, for his commission to preach must come only through you. What

extreme of absurdity ! If this man obeyed Christ, was he a preacher or was he not ? And when our Blessed Lord shortly afterwards issued his last command to the disciples, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, did this command take away and nullify this man's commission ? It must have done so, or there was a preacher of the gospel out of the line of apostolical succession. Did that command take away also, and nullify, the commission of the seventy, given and confirmed by the Saviour ? It must have done so, or here were seventy preachers of the gospel out of the line of apostolical succession.

Again, the hypothesis of prelatical episcopacy asserts that the commission to preach the gospel involved the commission to ordain others also, if not, then the Apostles had no commission to ordain. But if it did, then the commission of the seventy involved the commission to ordain others also, so that here are two distinct lines of succession already established, having twelve heads in one, and seventy in the other. And now let any episcopal bishop tell us, if he can, to which of these two lines, constituted on his own hypothesis, he traces up his own authority to preach the gospel ! Or at a much later period, let him tell us, if he can, to which of the two distinct and opposite reigning lines of popes, bishops and councils, he traces the passage of the apostolical commission down upon his own head and into his own palm for ordination ! That such opposing lines existed through whole generations is matter of undisputed history, and according to the episcopal hypothesis, one must have been right, and one wrong, or both were illegitimate, for each excommunicated the other ; but from one or the other, every

prelatical bishop, every man in the succession, must draw his authority. They are, therefore, every one of them vitiated and rendered null by this very uncertainty. According to the principles of common sense and common law, they are every one *bastardized*; for of two distinct and opposite lines of ancestry, they cannot tell to which they belong, nor, with any certainty, whether they can claim parentage from either.

## FOURTH LINE OF ARGUMENT.

But there is another line of argument still, pursued equally from the Scripture, which completes this to demonstration, and which shows that the greater the certainty with which the prelatrical successors and their trains of ordination trace themselves to either of these lines, the greater also is the certainty that they are out of the true line of the ministry of Christ. The more they confirm their own hypothesis, the more indisputably they prove themselves to be unauthorized intruders into the pastorship and government of Christ's flock. The argument is of immense importance, commencing in the first verse of the tenth chapter of the gospel according to John, in the words of Jesus.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door, is the Shepherd of the sheep. I AM THE DOOR." Mark here, the Lord Jesus does not say, The Apostles are the door, or, Ye, my Apostles, are the door, or, The Apostolic Commission is the door, or, The line of succession from the Apostles is the door; but I AM THE DOOR. Christ himself is the

door. Then every Pope and Bishop not introduced by Christ, not ordained by the Holy Spirit, is a thief and a robber. And what are they, whom thieves and robbers ordain ? What ordinal *virus* is that which passes through the wolfish hearts, and through the tainted palms, and down upon the bald pates of thieves and robbers ? Now we can show you hundreds of instances, not solitary, but continued from generation to generation, in which men have been themselves ordained, and have ordained others, who, had they lived in the Apostles' day, would have been anathematized as Simon Magus, and had they lived in our day, would have been sent to the state's prison for life, or hanged upon the gallows, for their crimes ! Whoremongers and adulterers, murderers and liars, we can name to you in the boasted prelatical succession from the Apostles, generation after generation, with not one pious personage known of to break the links of diabolical wickedness, the chain of demoniacal succession ! What sort of shepherds were these ? Did they come in by the door ? Did Jesus Christ ordain them ? Will any man have the blasphemous daring to say that our Blessed Lord put these men into the ministry ?—that the Saviour ordained men, against whom he at the same time warned his churches ? Did they come in by Christ ? If not, then were they thieves and robbers. And what kind of ministers could these thieves and robbers ordain ? If the doctrine of the apostolical succession were true, those that are in it are thieves and robbers ; they are out of the true ministry ; and it is only those, who have their ordination from some other source, that are the true shepherds.

I press this point. Either these whoremongers, and murderers, and liars, in the pretended priest's office, were ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ, or they were not. If you say that they were, then what blasphemy is it that you utter against his holy character ! It is, in effect, the blasphemy of those who said of old time, that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils ; for if ever the devil appeared on earth in human shape, it was in the persons of some of those who were called universal bishops, or were bishops under them, to carry out their atrocities. In holding this daring assumption of the apostolical succession, you come as near the borders of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, as any man would wish to tread, should he be trying the experiment how nearly he might blaspheme without being convicted of it. The Saviour put these men, these demons rather, into the ministry ? Let the thought perish, rather than be uttered ! For of whom did our Blessed Lord speak, or against whom did he warn his people, when he said, Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, come to you in the pretence of a line and a commission direct from the Apostles, but inwardly they are ravening wolves ? Of whom did he speak, if not of such as these ? And will you dare to say that such as these were put by the Saviour himself into the ministry ? But if not, they were thieves and robbers. And who were those false apostles, of whom Paul speaks, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ ? And no marvel ; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if Satan's ministers be also transformed as the ministers

of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. And will you say that such came in by the Door, that such were put into the ministry by Christ?

And yet, such is the assertion to which the advocates of this apostolical succession are driven for the support of their pretensions! And we have them concocting the monstrous and abominable argument that our Lord Jesus put Judas into the ministry, and all the successors of Judas in sheep's clothing, in order to afford the prelatrical successionists a standing proof that the wickedness of hell itself cannot vitiate the apostolical succession, but that it may come down unbroken, untainted, through the ministers and emissaries of Satan, no matter though the Lord forewarned his churches against such, and forbade them to receive them, and no matter though the Apostles Paul and Peter anathematize them, and declare them accursed. Yet it is argued that their very existence in the prelatrical ministry, in the apostolical succession, was permitted by the Saviour, in order to show to the world that Satan himself could not vitiate the *virus* of that succession, and that the gates of hell, though set wide open into the ministry, should not prevail, neither to impair that succession, nor to injure the church under it! And to crown this argument, they even go back to those profane wretches, the sons of Eli, and attempt to prove that because their shocking wickedness did not cause God to remove the succession of the Jewish priesthood into another line, therefore the succession of adulterers and whoremongers in the house of God can never vitiate or change the line of apostolical succession under the Christian dispensation!

And all this in the face of that tremendous curse pronounced upon the line of Eli, on account of this very wickedness in his sons, and its allowance by their father. Read the curse, the whole of it, in the second chapter of the first book of Samuel, and then say if it is not daring profaneness almost unparalleled, to resort to the wickedness of Hophni and Phinehas, for a proof that still greater immorality in the Christian ministry cannot injure the true prelatical succession, cannot prove that the men guilty of it were not appointed of Christ ! God said expressly that he *would* change the line of succession, that this very wickedness of these priests *caused* him to do it. “ Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house and the house of thy father should walk before me for ever : but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me ; for them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, and it shall come to pass that every one that is left in their house shall come and crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priest’s offices, that I may eat a piece of bread ! ” Let them go to Hophni and Phinehas that choose, for arguments to support the apostolical succession, and to Judas also ; the resort does but strikingly demonstrate the hopeless iniquity of their assumptions !

#### SACRIFICING PRIESTS ARE NOT OF CHRIST’S MINISTRY.

The cases of Nadab and Abihu are much more in point than those of Hophni and Phinehas, for they were struck dead, though in the line of the succession, for

offering strange fire, which the Lord had not commanded. Determine the character of a great portion of the *priests* in the apostolical succession by this incident, and you would condemn them at once, as no ministers of Christ. Their offering has been strange fire, which the Lord hath not commanded, and not only strange fire but blasphemy. For, what else is the pretended offering up of the body and blood of Christ as a daily sacrifice in the Mass, but the most shocking blasphemy? Or, if it were not blasphemy, still a strange presumptuous fire, which God not only hath not commanded, but hath forbidden, in that he hath said, "But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was ONCE offered to bear the sins of many." And again, "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ ONCE. And every priest (under the old dispensation) standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this man, after he had offered ONE SACRIFICE for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by ONE OFFERING he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

Now we say that it is evident that the profane assumption of the office and business of sacrificing priests on the part of the Christian ministry, is sufficient to put them out of that ministry, as not belonging to it; especially when there is added the blasphemous pretence of offering up in sacrifice to God, the Son of God himself, body and blood, soul and divinity, daily. They

who make such pretences, are like Nadab and Abihu ; but they are not of the Christian ministry ; they are not ministers of Christ. Yet they are in the line of the boasted apostolical succession ; they occupied, for more than a thousand years, all the parallels of that line ; if the cord has many strands, as has been amusingly argued, they are strands of sacrificing priests, and not preachers of the gospel, twisted together. And what sort of ministers could these men ordain ? And what sort of a succession is that which comes down from such men ? A succession of strange fire, a succession of death, a succession from men who were not themselves ministers of Christ, and could not ordain ministers. If, therefore, you demonstrate yourselves to be of the apostolical succession, and thereon found your claim as ministers of Christ, it is a demonstration that you are profane intruders into that ministry, put thereby men whose touch was sacrilege and death !

#### GENEALOGICAL LOGIC OF THE SUCCESSION.

When the demand is made on the advocates of the apostolical succession that they show step by step the proofs that they possess it, that it has come down to them alone unbroken, uninitiated, the most general reply is in the most general terms, that it is obviously impracticable, and not to be demanded, that they should show their genealogy for so many centuries, but that it is perfectly clear that they derive their commission from men who were themselves ordained, who derived it in their turn from men who were also ordained, and so on to a point “ whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary !”

And this is the cat,  
That killed the rat,  
That eat the malt,  
That lay in the house  
That Jack built.

Besides our nursery rhymes, we are reminded by this powerful process of logic, of the ratiocination of the Indians in regard to the Cosmogony, that the world rests on the back of an elephant, the elephant stands on a great rhinoceros, the rhinoceros on a huge tortoise, and after the tortoise is chaotic mud. This chaos is what the prelatrical successionists have to cast the anchor of their argument in, after all, for they go back to a point beyond which the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, for the very good reason that the memory of man runneth not thither at all. Beyond the memory of man ! Then assuredly you have got beyond certain knowledge. And now, how will you trace the precious line of the true succession ? Here are two, three, four or five popes, and as many lines of prelatrical wolves in sheep's clothing. Which of them will you choose ? Here are almost forty tracks save one. Which is the track of the Apostles ? Having come to this gulf, your scent is at fault. What will you do ? A river of chaos runs through it, and your apostolical succession has escaped you.

The keen instinct even of prelatrical ambition is at fault. I am reminded of the anecdote of the dog in search of his master, who, coming to a point where three roads met, smelt at the first, smelt at the second, and then darted off upon the third, concluding that, as his master was not to be traced in either of the two

first, he had gone the other of course. Now in searching for your true succession, you are very much in need of a sagacious ecclesiastical pointer. You don't know which way the sacerdotal, sacramental, ordinalional virtue was shot through the dark ages. If, as the doctrine of prelacy affirms, it comes through the palm of the hand, no matter what the heart or the head may be, a keen-scented dog could soon find it out. Pity, I say, that you had not such an ecclesiastical pointer to course the genuine hare of apostolical authority ! The absurdity is such as makes the supporters of it the laughing-stock of Christendom. One of their own bishops in England has well said that to spread abroad this notion of the apostolical succession, and to insist on its necessity, is to make themselves the derision of the world ; and truly, nothing but a bigotry and blindness next to insanity, could prevent men of common sense from at once acknowledging it.

#### NECESSITY OF AN AUTHENTIC, PROVEN GENEALOGY.

We call for the genealogy of these men, who thus gratuitously assume themselves to be the successors, and the only successors, of the Apostles. Their very assumption makes the demonstration of their genealogy essential, because the assumption is imposed as necessary to salvation. If their genealogy be of divine right, and a faith in it essential to salvation, they must show it. No man can believe in it unless he either sees it for himself, or has the Word of God for it ; and as our apostolical successionists have not yet shown us their own names set down in any divinely inspired

catalogue, and traced up to the Apostles (however they may yet bring forward such a pretence), they must take the other alternative, and give us a ground of belief in their successionship, by showing us plainly their own genealogy up to the source from which they pretend to derive it. If the matter in dispute were the hereditary right to any crown in Christendom, a man would be deemed a candidate for Bedlam, who should dare to come forward and demand, on pain of high treason, the belief of all men in him as the hereditary successor, without showing, or pretending to show, one particle of evidence that he is of the blood-royal. He may trace back a lineage as far as he pleases, and call it royal, but if he does not trace it to the royal stock he is an impudent impostor. And just so with those who step forward and make the insane demand that we, on peril of our salvation, regard and receive them as the only ministers of Christ, on the ground of their having come in the line of what they call the apostolical succession. They are impudent impostors, if they do not show and prove to us demonstrably, step by step, the line of their genealogy. A single break scatters their pretended proof to the winds. An unbroken line must be demonstrated, or it is no line at all. It is no more proof to us that they are of the apostolical line, to show that ministers have been ordained generation after generation, from time immemorial, than the fact that Confucius lived before the birth of Christ proves Mohammed to have descended down from Judas.

Two things are necessary, neither of which is possible, for the advocates and appropriators of this insane

assumption. They must first prove that there is such a thing as the apostolical succession ; which they cannot do but by tracing, step by step, with unquestioned demonstration, a lineage of ordination direct down through the whole waste and chaos of time and iniquity, for eighteen hundred years, from some one particular apostle. It is manifest, from the nature of the case, that generalities and suppositions are here mere absurdities. There must be demonstration, step by step, or there is no proof at all. Probabilities, in this case, are of no avail whatever ; they are, as in tracing a line of ancestry, mere proofs of bastardy. There is either an apostolical succession, or there is not ; it can be proved that there is, only by pointing out and demonstrating the line ; and the moment you have done this you have put an end to all question who is of the line, because if there be an apostolical succession, the particular line, in full demonstration, is the only proof of it.

In the second place, they must prove that they themselves are of this line, which again they cannot do but by tracing, step by step, with unquestioned demonstration, a lineage of ordination *backwards*, direct, beyond the same whole waste and chaos of time, revolution, and iniquity, for eighteen hundred years, up to some one particular apostle. We have not yet found a Bedlamite who can do this ; I do not know that this freak of insanity has been as yet developed in any one of the supporters of this fanaticism of the succession ; how soon it may be, we cannot tell.

## PROFANENESS OF THE MODE OF ARGUMENT FOR THE SUCCESSION.

One thing is clear; they have dared profanely to degrade the Word of God, by putting the evidence for the truth and authenticity of the Scriptures on a level with the existing evidence of their apostolical succession, which is no evidence at all. This is a profaneness which has been shown in the most masterly manner in one of the letters of Dr. Potts, to lead inevitably to sheer infidelity, throwing away the whole internal evidence of Scripture, and rendering the external evidence worthless. Of the infidel tendency of this assumption I shall, therefore, say nothing; it has been sufficiently demonstrated. But I will take another view. I will admit, for the sake of argument, what the assumption of the prelatist supposes, that there is no internal evidence of Christianity in the Scriptures, any more than there is of apostolical succession in the air. Now, then, the assumption of the successionists is this, that there is as much and as strong evidence that they are of the only true line, as there is external evidence of the truth and authenticity of the Scriptures; which, after all, they say is only probability. But there is this infinite difference. The external evidence of the Scriptures is not essential to salvation; whereas the evidence of the apostolical succession is made by its advocates to be thus essential. Now, had the external evidence of the Scriptures been a thing essential to salvation, it would have been made as clear as the Scriptures themselves; it would not have been left to be ascertained by probabilities. But we have the

Word of God itself in our own possession, and it would still be the Word of God if all its external evidence were annihilated ; so that for faith, for salvation, it is of no moment whatever whether a man have so much as heard whether there be any external evidence. Much more it is of no moment whatever, whether a man ever heard of this bugbear of the apostolical succession. But if that succession were essential to salvation, as its advocates arrogantly and blasphemously assert, then they would be bound to show, with as much certainty as if it were written from heaven, their own commission, and they would be bound to show every step by which it is demonstrated ; and if one single step fails, so that they have to rely on supposition, which they may, perhaps, call faith, their claim fails. Such a thing, a matter not susceptible of proof, cannot be necessary to salvation, cannot be of any essential importance.

Besides, in what is this faith to be exercised ? Not in any Word of God surely ; for the successionists will not say that they, Richard Roe and John Doe, have been named and commissioned in God's Word ; and the faith in the promise of Christ to be with his ministers is of no use for them, unless they first prove themselves to be among his ministers, which on their own theory they cannot do, except they first prove themselves to be of the apostolical succession, which again they cannot do except by faith in the Saviour's promise to be with his ministers, which again does them no good, unless they can prove that they are among his ministers, which again they confess themselves unable to prove, but by showing that they are of the succession, which

again they cannot show but by faith in the Saviour's promises ; and so on *ad infinitum*. Here is a succession for you indeed, a succession in a circle. If ever there was a specimen of gross and ridiculous reasoning in a circle it is this. The apostolical succession has never been broken, because Christ promised to be with his ministers ; we are of the apostolical succession, because that succession has never been broken ; and that succession has never been broken because we are ministers of Christ, who do now exist ; and we are ministers of Christ because we are of the apostolical succession ; and we are of the apostolical succession because it has never been broken !

#### IMMORAL TENDENCY OF THE ARGUMENTS FOR THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

With great profaneness, with an immorality of reasoning which is scarcely outdone in Dens' Theology itself, the prelatrical successionists argue that because wickedness in the Jewish Priesthood did not break up the line of succession there, neither can such wickedness break up the line of the assumed apostolical succession under the Christian dispensation. They argue from adulterous sons of Eli to the admission of adulterers in the Christian Ministry ! They argue from the case of Balaam, who, they say, notwithstanding his wickedness, was a prophet, to the admission of men equally wicked, as ministers of Christ ! And this in the face of such a description of Balaam, and such a warning of the churches against those who should be like him, in Peter and in Jude ; "cursed children,

which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam." But indeed, if because Balaam was used of God as a prophet, therefore Balaams may be admitted in the line of the apostolical succession, we might just as well argue that because Balaam's ass was used of God as a prophet, therefore the existence of bonâ-fide asses may be admitted in the line of the apostolical succession, and yet not vitiate it at all. Indeed an actual braying ass ordained in the ministry would not disgrace its sacredness one half so much as the ordination and existence of such murderers and adulterers, as have sometimes, from generation to generation, constituted links in the boasted apostolical succession. Just so it is gravely argued that because Caiaphas who crucified Christ, was still a legitimate high-priest, therefore the ministers of Christ under the Christian dispensation may also crucify him afresh and put him to an open shame by their villainies, and yet not break or vitiate the line of the apostolical succession in the least. We can apply to such reasonings as these nothing but the image which Jude uses of such exemplars as are resorted to, "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame."

#### NO RELATION BETWEEN THE JEWISH PRIESTHOOD AND THE PRETENDED APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

But even this very vile argument used by the advocates for prelacy proceeds on an assumption of the whole matter in question. It is *assumed* that there is such a thing as the apostolical succession, and then it is *argued*, that because the most diabolical wickedness

did not break the succession in the Jewish Priesthood, therefore it cannot break this assumed succession in the Christian ministry. Here again the argument (which, however, has not begun to be an argument), involves and proceeds upon the ground of a second assumption, namely, that the apostolical succession is of the same nature with that of the Jewish Priesthood ; if not, how can any argument be admitted from one to the other ? But if you would conform the Christian Ministry to the Jewish Priesthood in its corruptions, with the line of succession unbroken notwithstanding, you must conform it in other points. Your own assumption compels you to run the parallel, and in what points soever you are deficient, and do not come up to the requisites for an unbroken line in the Priesthood, your apostolical succession fails and becomes worthless. Run the parallel then, as your argument compels you to do, and you speedily find that in the line of the Jewish Priesthood, for a man to be acknowledged as a Priest, and to be permitted to perform the functions of a Priest, it was absolutely necessary that he should demonstrate his genealogy. He must demonstrate his claim to belong to the succession, by showing an authenticated, proven genealogy, step by step, otherwise he was turned out. All claim to a succession, without such demonstration, is a piece of vulgar impudence, imposture and absurdity. You assume, forsooth, in the first place, the figment of an apostolical succession, and next you assume yourselves to be in the line of that succession, but when the demonstration of your claim is demanded, when your genealogy is required to prove your descent, Oh, you answer, we

have no proof of that, we cannot be expected to give proof of that ; the external evidence of the Scriptures themselves is not a mathematical demonstration, much less can you require us to demonstrate our genealogy. Why, we cannot trace it half way through the dark ages. We must have faith in Christ's promise that he would be with the ministry always to the end of the world.

Now we say, your proposition of the apostolical succession, without a demonstration of your genealogy, is an audacious, arrogant absurdity. In the case of the Jewish Priesthood we find that even where there was a probability, nay, a certainty, that individuals were of the line of the succession, yet, if they could not *prove their genealogy*, they were cast out. Read it in the book of Ezra, ii. 59—62. “They sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found ; therefore were they, as polluted, put from the Priesthood.” Now this, according to the confession of the Prelatists themselves, is the dilemma to which they of the true succession are reduced ; they cannot even show their fathers' house, and their pedigree whether they were of Israel, much less the register of their genealogy. Now what should you think of a man who should come forward and lay claim to an estate, which has been always held in common for the benefit of the city of New York, as the property of the city, and upon being required to show his proofs, to produce the evidences of his heirship down from the original grant, he shall say, I cannot be expected to demonstrate that ; the nature of the case is such as not to be susceptible of documentary or mathe-

matical proof. I can tell you that my father and my grandfather always said that that estate belonged to them, and I can show you that I am their lineal successor, but you cannot expect me to produce the documents, after so long lapse of time and so many revolutions. Even of the external evidence of the Scriptures you do not require mathematical proof, you have to content yourself with probabilities, and since there is certainly a succession of ownership in this property, and my father and grandfather always maintained that it belonged to them, it is necessary to exercise faith; for the original terms of the grant declared that the property should always be in existence, and as it must always exist as somebody's property, and as I exist as a claimant, it is a degree of demonstration as strong as that which you have for the authenticity of the Scriptures, that the original terms of the grant meant me, and contemplated my existence as the holder of the property. It must have been so, for my father and grandfather declared it! This is the amount of the assumptions of prelacy. It is not wonderful that Archbishop Wake himself declared the forthputters of such assumptions to be insane. They are indeed more fit for a Romish Bedlam, than for the limits of sane Christendom.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY NOT AN APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION, BUT THE POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE IN CHRIST.

But now in regard to this singular reference by the advocates of the apostolical succession to the line of the Jewish Priesthood in support of their allegation

that the most devilish wickedness cannot vitiate their genealogy as Christian Priests, we have another answer to make, which demonstrates the presumptuous and absurd nature of the importance attached to such a succession. It is this, namely, that the line of the Jewish succession itself *was* set aside and departed from (and that, according to the threatening of God in the ears of Eli, because of the wickedness of the priests in the Levitical line), by the coming of our Lord, in an unchangeable priesthood, *not in, but out of that line*. This argument is powerfully set forth by Paul in verses 11—16 of the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and also in verses 6—9 of the eighth chapter of the same. “If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident, for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.”

So also the Christian ministry, springing from Christ, the Great Shepherd and Bishop of the sheep, are “made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life;” not after the

rule of a pretended, apostolical succession, but after the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, by the Holy Ghost, by a new spiritual creation. The true succession of the Christian ministry is the power of an endless life, not because of the figment of a line from the Apostles, skin-deep in the palm of the hand, but because it is the life of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ, the Church, because it is a perpetual new creation and anointing from on high by that grace which dwelleth with the Church and shall be in the Church for ever. It is the power of an endless life, because it is no lineal succession of men, but in every case a new and fresh spiritual consecration by the Saviour. It is the *power* of an endless life, in opposition to the *ceremony* of an apostolical succession, because it is the ministration of the Spirit in opposition to the religion of tradition and of form. It is the religion of regeneration by the Spirit and of ministerial unction and consecration by the Spirit, instead of the religion of baptismal regeneration and sacramental consecration by the palm of the prelatrical hand. The true ministry is the power of an endless life in opposition to the formalism of a sacramental death; a death, in which a thousand Judases might be in the ministry, crucifying the Lord afresh and putting him to an open shame; and yet, inasmuch as it comes in the line of the apostolical succession, it is to be invested with the form of life, and as sacredly enshrined, admired, and venerated, as if it were the manna of the soul, or the shew-bread from heaven!

There is a noble passage in Milton, in which this freedom of the Christian ministry, and its superiority to the law of a carnal commandment, are so admirably

set forth, that I shall quote it. "It cannot be unknown by what expressions the holy Apostle St. Paul spares not to explain to us the nature and condition of the law, calling those ordinances, which were the chief and essential offices of the priests, the elements and rudiments of the world, both weak and beggarly. Now to breed and bring up the children of the promise, the heirs of liberty and grace, under such a kind of government as is professed to be but an imitation of that ministry, which engendereth to bondage the sons of Agar, how can this be but a foul injury and derogation, if not a cancelling of that birth-right and immunity, which Christ hath purchased for us by his blood? For the ministration of the law, consisting of carnal things, drew to it such a ministry, as consisted of carnal respects, dignity, precedence, and the like. And such a ministry established in the gospel, as is founded upon the points and terms of superiority, and nests itself in worldly honors, will draw to it, and we see it doth, such a religion as runs back again to the old pomp and glory of the flesh; for doubtless there is a certain attraction and magnetic force betwixt the religion and the ministerial form thereof. If the religion be pure, spiritual, simple, and lowly, as the gospel most truly is, such must the face of the ministry be. And in like manner, if the form of the ministry be grounded in the worldly degrees of authority, honor, temporal jurisdiction, we see with our eyes, it will turn the inward power and purity of the gospel into the outward carnality of the law; evaporating and exhaling the internal worship into empty conformities and gay shows. And what remains in that case but that we should run into as dangerous and deadly

apostasy as our lamentable neighbors the papists, who by this very snare and pitfall of imitating the ceremonial law, fell into that irrecoverable superstition as must needs make void the covenant of salvation to them that persist in this blindness.”

#### SECOND SOPHISM IN THE USE OF THE WORD BISHOP.

(II.) The second point of sophistry to be noted, concerns the use of the word bishop. Every philosopher knows, and in reasoning on subjects overlaid with tradition, or encumbered with immemorial prejudices, which have been sanctified by power, has had to lament the misguiding influence of words, perverted from their original meaning, and yet made to retain all the power of that meaning over the common mind. The intellectual philosopher has to contend against the difficulties of sensuous images, clinging to metaphysical expressions, like sea-weed to a pearl oyster, and misinterpreting his meaning to those with whom he reasons. When he means the pearl, the undisciplined mind thinks of the clustering sea-weed. And just so with theology ; and especially so with the word bishop. Fishing in the troubled waters of prelatical antiquity, the school of the famous apostolical succession have drawn up the great oyster of diocesan episcopacy ; they have used for this purpose the drag-net of the Fathers, and they hold up the whole fish, with all its appendages, shell, sea-weed, and all, *διοικητής*, lordship, authority, priests, deacons, deans, hanging to it, and they say, This is the primitive bishop ; this the meaning of the word bishop. And this signification they have so annexed and perpetuated, so

connected it in every man's mind with the fantastical image presented, fresh from the pool of the corruptions of Christianity, that it is extremely difficult to disintegrate the word from such connexions, from such extraneous appendages in the common mind. It has been covered, as Burke would say, with "the awful hoarfrost of innumerable ages ;" and this frost lies so thick upon the word, that you really have to cut through ice to get at it. It is, I say, much more difficult to disintegrate the word from its ambitious prelatrical incrustations, than it is to cut the hidden shining pearl from the shell of the oyster. Nevertheless, neither the oyster, nor the shell, nor the corals, nor the forests of sea-weed, which you show us in your drag-net, are the primitive pearl, or the growth of it, any more than the tiara and scarlet mantle of the Pope, investing a certain woman in the Apocalypse, are the growth of the threadbare cloak which Paul left at Troas. There is a pearl indeed, there is a primitive bishop, a pure, shining, simple minister of Jesus Christ ; but the word bishop, the *επίσκοπος* of the scriptures, no more means a diocesan bishop, a prelate of the modern Episcopal or Romish church, than the word *pearl* means oyster ; and the modern ecclesiastical dignitary baptized with that name, no more means the bishop of the New Testament, than the word or the thing *oyster*, means pearl.

#### EVERY CHURCH ITS OWN BISHOP.

Now it is of essential importance that this sophism be kept in mind. When the fashionable exclusives of modern Christianity deck themselves with the cross of

their order, "No church without a bishop," they mean a prelate, an overseer of pastors the true bishops, and not a pastor, a primitive bishop ; they mean the overseeing, the overlaying oyster, and not the primitive pearl. We say, also, No church without a bishop ; that is, let every church have its own bishop ; but we mean not the oyster, the prelate, but the pearl, the simple pastor of the flock, and minister of Jesus Christ. We hold to a bishop, as well as the sect of Episcopaliens, but not the lordship of a bishop. We hold to such a bishop as Peter defines, when he says to the presbyters, Feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, performing the duties of your office as bishops, not as being lords over God's heritage, but as examples to the flock. Peter does not say, taking the oversight of the churches nor of the pastors, as he must have said to a diocesan prelate, but of the flock, as Christ says now to his ministers. We hold to such a bishop as Paul defines, when he calls the elders of the church and says, Feed the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops. He does not say, Go the rounds of your diocese, and take care of the pastors, and keep the churches in order ; he does not say, Oversee the churches and pastors of your diocese, as he must have said to modern Episcopal bishops, but, Feed that flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers. Nor does he single out one, and say to him, Act the *επισκοπος*, the bishop, as a prelatical overseer, but, Feed the flock, ye overseers, that flock, that church, in Ephesus, over which the Holy Ghost hath placed you as presbyters, as bish-

ops. In this primitive apostolic sense we hold the doctrine, No church without a bishop.

Every man may see the difference; let it be borne in mind. Let this word bishop be disintegrated from the folds, the involutions of lordship, title, rank, authority, under which it is buried, like the inveterate convolvings of Gentile authority, against the imitation of which, the Lord Jesus Christ warned and forbade his disciples. Let the word be restored to its simple primitive meaning, and the sophism ceases. The truth becomes this, namely, Every church its own bishop, its minister, its pastor, set over it in the Lord for its edification, and accountable to no bishop of bishops, but to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The perversion of this word grew out of human ambition. But so plain and palpable was its meaning in the New Testament, that for more than two hundred years it was not possible to turn it from its application. Even when restricted to the president among the presbyters, it still, for more than two hundred years, signified the pastor of a single church; the bishop was *primus inter pares*, first among the body of coequal presbyters; though *they* were not bishops, he was still simply a presbyter. Neither office nor officer, like the modern Episcopal bishop and his diocese, had any existence. Not a sentence can be brought from the writings of the first two hundred and fifty years of the Christian church, which gives even an intimation of the existence of modern diocesan episcopacy, or a hint at the creation of prelatical dignity. Nor, when the term bishop, little by little enlarged and dignified, began its course of actual perversion, did

it without opposition advance towards the diocesan application. The Monk Jerome, a man of unbounded authority, in some respects the greatest of the Fathers, thundered his rebukes against the ambition of the bishops, which even then was growing faster than their name; and Jerome, writing about the year 375, called back the churches to the remembrance of the fact that in the New Testament, bishop and presbyter are the same, and that bishops had grown to be above presbyters “more by the custom of the church, than by the true dispensation of Christ.”

The first genuine high churchman of antiquity, as he has been called, was Cyprian of Carthage, in whose writings, if anywhere, the elements of diocesan episcopacy ought to be found, if any such existed in his day; and yet, from his writings it is clearly manifest that the bishop in his time was the pastor of a single flock. Nay, he himself, with all his high-church notions, was the minister of a single church, nothing more. And the nearer you go to the Apostles’ times, the more are the testimonies of the fathers entirely opposed to diocesan episcopacy; in this opposition they agree, in whatever else they differ. The argument from them is entirely against episcopacy; not a voice for two hundred years can be found to help or sanction it. And when you come so near to the Apostles as the epistle of Clemens Romanus to the Corinthians, and that of Polycarp to the Philippians, the proof both from the letter and the spirit of these epistles (one of them being the epistle of a holy fellow-laborer of Paul), is overwhelming. But after a few centuries, the appeal to the Fathers is an appeal to lying witnesses.

## PROGRESS OF THE ASSUMPTION.

The term being perverted, and the dignity of diocesan bishop established, it became thenceforward the interest of all parties to sustain, justify, and strengthen the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The apostolical succession was claimed, not for presbyters, but for bishops and the pope. And here we get into the track, in which the advocates of apostolical succession have been running round and round for centuries; the first man that lost his way, and made the complete circle, saying within himself, when he came to his own horse's footsteps, Here are the tracks of the Apostles, this is doubtless the succession; and the multitudes who have gone the same round ever since, uttering the same words, and always making the tracks of the Apostles broader and more beaten. In our day some men have had the hardihood to go even to the New Testament for diocesan bishops; but, in the first formation of the circle, the forgery was too recent for that; it was too manifest for any man to think of contradicting it, that presbyters and bishops, in the New Testament, are the same thing. They did not, therefore, dream of setting the bishops in their establishment *jure divino*. It was a very late period, even in the corruptions of Christianity, that gave birth to that monstrous pretension; if they could get bishops accepted *jure humano*, it was enough for them, for they knew that for such an order there was no *jus divinum* in existence. But, in our day, there are those who not only claim that this order, confessedly foreign from the New Testament, not to be

found in all the sacred oracles, an order of human invention and addition to the New Testament, should not only be received as a true clerical order, but that the church of Christ should not even be considered as a church without it! The claim is now, that that is the only church of Christ which possesses it. This is the very lunacy of ecclesiastical bigotry, more fit for the insane asylum than for a community of harmonious and sober-minded Christians.

It is humiliating to be obliged seriously to refute such pretensions; we would much rather treat them as the keepers of lunatics do their patients, who imagine themselves to be monarchs, or even incarnations of divinity; but if we should humor them, we should soon find their pretensions to exclusive Christianity to be no mere theory, but replete with the *virus* and sting of religious persecution. Besides, they rely so entirely upon assumption and assertion, and are accustomed to put forth their assertions in so bold and reckless a manner, as if they would have all the force of proof, that it becomes necessary to interpose a requisition for authority, and to show clearly, that besides the uncertainties and traditions of the fathers, they have nothing at all but assumption and assertion to rely upon. In fact, they do themselves confess as much as this, in the answer they sometimes make to our requisition of clear proof in the Scriptures. We have no such proof to show, they say; we cannot bring it, not a solitary text. And then, in order to cover up the weakness of their case, they deliberately debase and underrate the proof of scriptural doctrines in the Bible itself; asserting, with infidel profaneness, that it is impossible to prove

even the fundamental truths of Christianity by particular independent texts! In this they act not exactly the part of counterfeiters, but a much worse part, that of debasing and depreciating the true coin, in order that their own spurious stuff may not be seen and rejected as worthless. They are willing to undermine the buttresses of Christianity itself, rather than that their own miserable *shanties* should appear not so strong, or be seen to have no scriptural foundation. It is difficult to speak too strongly of the wickedness of this fanaticism.

#### THIS MODE OF REASONING INJURIOUS TO THE GOSPEL, AND DESTRUCTIVE OF ALL FAITH.

It is important to show, a little more at large, the evil and infidel tendency of their mode of procedure. They acknowledge their want of definite Scriptural proof, and also their entire failure to prove an unbroken descent from the Apostles. They then resort to faith, demanding, upon peril of our salvation, a faith which they present no proof for us to build upon. But in what is faith to be exercised? In an acknowledged uncertainty! Now observe the absurdity of this; compare it with the definite grounds on which faith is required of us in the gospel.

The faith which, in divine things, we are called upon to exercise, in peril of our salvation, is a faith built upon certainty, the highest certainty of which the human mind is capable, even the declaration and promise of God, so that he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar. Therefore, when God calls on us to exer-

cise faith, he gives us certainty as its foundation. But here, in the case of the apostolical succession, it is demanded of us that we exercise faith in an acknowledged uncertainty ! The uncertainty is confessed, is avowed, and then is made a basis of faith, and that faith represented as essential to salvation ! When God tells us to believe, he says, Believe, because it is proved ; because it is certain by the highest proof. But these prelatrical divines, these logicians of the apostolical succession, actually call on us to believe because it is *not* proved ; nay, because it cannot *be* proved. *Credo, quia impossibile est.* And then, to cover and conceal the emptiness of their pretensions, they tell us, in effect, that nothing can be proved distinctly and clearly ; that in the nature of things we have to believe without proof. Perhaps, then, they would have us rely on intuition for the proof of the apostolical succession. Not at all ; nothing so definite as that ; faith must have a larger sweep than that ; this faculty has gained a new development in the apostolical successionists, and whereas the loftiest form of faith has ever been, I believe because I *know*, with these men the all-digesting, all-devouring formula is this, I believe, because I *don't know* ; I believe, because it is uncertain.

When we call for the proof of their pretensions from God's word, they first of all prepare the way by deteriorating that kind of proof, and diminishing men's confidence in its importance ; just like usurers, who secretly clip their neighbors' coin, in order that they may get it all into their own hands at a discount. Knowing well that they cannot produce one single text of scripture definitely in their favor, definitely

teaching their exclusive dogma, they dare to assert, in the face of the knowledge of all Christendom to the contrary, that not even one of the fundamental doctrines of the gospel can be proved in the same way, by definite, conclusive passages. They dare to say that Socinianism itself would triumph over evangelical truth, if that truth had to rely upon distinct, conclusive, explicit texts! I am at a loss how to characterize with sufficient severity the bold yet treacherous wickedness of such sophistry. Rather than that our cause should not be supported, or should seem to want support, say these men, we will involve the Christian system itself in our own weakness, we will bury the gospel itself in our ruins. If you will not eat our loaves alone, say they to the world, if you will not consent to take only the bread marked at our counter, we will debase and poison the bread of all Christendom. If you will insist upon the apostolical succession being proved from the Bible, then we will make all scriptural proof so doubtful as to be worthless, so doubtful, that you will be glad to go to tradition to defend yourselves from the attacks of infidels.

Their course is like that of men, who, having to fight in an open field with weapons to the use of which they are unaccustomed, but which their adversaries have at perfect command, have gone stealthily and put poison into the handles of their opponents' swords, and unscrewed the locks of their muskets, and wet their powder. Just so with these logicians of the apostolical succession; they dare not cope with the word of God as it is; they wet the powder.

But not only so, they have another resort. When

you demand their proof from Scripture, they say it must not surprise you, nor weaken your faith in their claims, even though you should not find them distinctly set forth in the Bible ; for you are to remember that there are a great many things which our Saviour doubtless taught, that are not set down there, and prelatical episcopacy was doubtless one of them ; so you must consider that which is not, as though it were ; you must have a faith that shall honor the Scriptures by believing *what would have been in them*, if there could have been another volume. You are to remember the declaration of John, that if all that our Saviour said and did on earth had been written, the world itself could not have contained the books. Now a book on Diocesan Episcopacy, clearly teaching it, and making it essential to salvation, there can be no doubt was among those unwritten books of the Saviour. You must, therefore, have a faith not merely *in* Scripture, but *above* Scripture, comprising those things which are not, as though they were. When you read the Bible in search of Diocesan Episcopacy, and find it not, then say within yourself, This is doubtless one of the lost books of the Saviour ; this is one of those volumes essential to salvation, that would have been written, if the world had been large enough. Poor world ! I must learn not to circumscribe my faith by its dimensions ; it is obviously not big enough to contain the august claims, the vast magnificence, the divine authority of Diocesan Episcopacy fully written out and authenticated. The very want of such authentication is the highest proof of the grandeur of those claims. A point of minor importance, such as the doctrine of

the atonement, might be set forth in explicit texts; but a point of such might, magnitude and glory, as the apostolical succession, scorns to be so confined; the world would not hold the books that should be written. Call for texts in proof of it? Who does not see the folly of such presumption? Texts to prove the apostolical succession? Why, the very foundation of your faith in it must be its utter uncertainty.

### THIRD SOPHISM, IN REGARD TO THE NATURE OF THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE.

(III.) Another sophism respects the nature of the ministerial office, and the dignity of the ministers of Christ, and assumes for them an origin and independency apart from the church and superior to it. I have even been accused of degrading the ministerial office, and derogating from my own dignity as a minister, because I have in a former lecture deduced the ministers of Christ from the church, from Christ's own sacred, blessed body! He can have read the New Testament to very little purpose, and must have magnified his office more than the Saviour and the church, who can possibly admit the conception that the ministers of Christ do not come from the church of Christ. The object in such an one's mind doubtless is this, namely, to make the ministry superior to the church, and the church dependent, not so much on Christ, as on the ministry. This is the essence of a Hierarchy, and this is the element of the Hierarchical Despotism. But I blush and am ashamed that any man, who has not the self-interest of prelatrical dignity to blind him, and so

may be supposed to look with more impartiality upon the subject, should estimate the office of the ministry and the dignity of the minister, not by the service done to Christ's body in the enlarging and edifying of it, but by the lordship over that body! Shame on such a palpable manifestation of Hierarchical ambition!

We open the New Testament, and what do we find? Do we find the least sanction of this assumed superiority? “And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace, for by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.” The very first introduction of these Hierarchical propensities and pretensions produced an ambitious rivalry and quarrel in the very presence of the Saviour. “And he said, ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many! ὅς εὖν θέλῃ ἐν ὑμῖν εἶναι πρόσωπος, ἔστι τὸ ὑμῶν δοῦλος· καὶ ὅς εὖν θέλῃ ἐν ὑμῖν μέγας γενέσθαι, ἔστι τὸ ὑμῶν διάκονος.” And what do you conceive to be the meaning of the word minister? Lord or governor, you will say, surely, according to the Hierarchical system. No such thing. The one of these words, διάκονος,

signifies a servant, a free serving man, the other *δοῦλος*, signifies a servant of all work, a slave. And our blessed Lord, to make the nature of the office more conspicuous as opposed to ambition and selfishness, and as consisting in doing good to others, says, he that will be great among you, let him be your *διάκονος*, but he that will be first of all, let him be your *δοῦλος*. So the essence of the ministry of Jesus Christ is benevolent service, serving others in doing them good, especially ministering to their spiritual good for Jesus' sake. This is the ministry, according as Christ himself came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. O wonderful love ! O blessed example ! There was a wide gulf between this ambitious quarrel among the disciples for lordship and supremacy, and that humility and love, with which afterwards they were made ready to wash one another's feet, and to lay down their own lives for each other in the work of the gospel.

#### ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

And now let me ask, Where do the ministry come from, if not from the church ? Was not the Apostle Paul in the church before he was in the ministry ? And Timothy, was he not taken out of the church to be ordained as an Evangelist ? And all true ministers of Christ, do they not, must they not of necessity, spring from the church, must they not be members of the body of Christ, before they can be prepared to minister to that body in spiritual things ? Do they bear the church, or does the church bear them ? Verily if a cohort of angels should bring a minister not of Christ's

church to any particular church, and propose him for ordination, it would be the duty of that church to reject him. A man *cannot be* a minister of Christ without first belonging to the Church of Christ. When our blessed Lord ascended on high and led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men, he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. But where did these gifts come from ? From the church of Christ, by the selection of the Holy Spirit ; from the church of Christ, every member of which is one of a Royal Priesthood. Christ needs not to look anywhere but unto his own churches for his own ministers. They are *from* the church, *for* the church.

The highest honor they can have is first, to belong themselves to the church of Jesus Christ, and second to be employed as servants of that church. This is their dignity ; their authority is service, and the moment it passes into anything else, it is usurpation. They are not to be lords over God's heritage, but examples to the flock. They are not to have dominion over faith, but to be helpers of joy. Their rivalry is to be, not, who shall be Prime Minister of Christ in his kingdom, but, who shall most faithfully and self-forgettingly edify the body of Christ ; who shall, with most humility of mind and many tears, go beyond his brethren in enduring hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ ; in lowliness of mind, each esteeming other better than themselves. "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of Christ, in much patience, in afflictions, in distresses, in necessities, in stripes,

prisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings ; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well known, as dying and behold we live, as chastened, and not killed, as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing all things.” There is an apostolic succession for you ; and we may be sure, if this had been the succession so vaunted by prelatists and worldly minds, it would never have been proclaimed in bishops’ palaces ; the possession of the apostolical succession would have been gladly relinquished and left to proscribed conventicles. Yes, the apostolical succession itself would have been the sign of heresy and schism, and not the want of it.

#### HIERARCHICAL VIEWS OF THE MINISTRY.

Now, I pray you, contrast with this view, which we cannot deny to be scriptural, the opinions cherished and the views entertained, by those who not only prefer lordship in the church, but who absolutely hold up the lunatic assertion, that there can be no church without that office and creature, a prelatical diocesan bishop. I will take a fair example. A sermon was preached not long since, by an episcopal clergyman of this city, from the following text, namely, “ Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.” Now, if you will believe it,

this profound expositor took the word ministers to signify much the same as foreign ministers sent by a monarch with plenipotentiary powers to a foreign court. Of course, they are not in any way accountable to that court, and they must punctilioiusly stand upon all their rights, and dignities, and authorities of their office, the honor of their monarch requiring that his representative at a foreign court be a match for any grandee in pomp and circumstance of independent authority. Being not selected nor commissioned by the people or the State to whom he is sent, he has no accountability whatever to them for the manner in which his trust is performed, nor they any right whatever relative to him, to put him out of his office, but only the right and the duty to hear his message. In the case of the minister of Christ, I suppose he would add also the right and the duty of paying his expenses, supporting at court the establishment of the plenipotentiary, a thing which we never hear of foreign courts doing, even our plain Republic being obliged to look up the outfit and pay the salaries of the plenipotentiaries it sends abroad. We doubt if a more amusing example of the exposition of Scripture to bolster up the hierarchical despotism, could be found in all the Middle Ages than this. It is not necessary that we should dwell upon it to show its utter inconsistency with the description of the ministry in the gospel of Christ ; but we must notice the almost ludicrous application made of the term ministers in the text, as if they were analogous to foreign ministers, and invested with the same powers. You will be not a little amused, when I tell you that the word in the text is *ὑπηρέτας*, servants, so that it follows that either

the preacher knowingly deceived his hearers in deducing from this passage the prerogatives of a foreign minister for the ministers of Christ, or he must have forgotten to look at the original, and absolutely supposed that the word would bear that meaning. The word itself is very striking. In reality, literally, it means the rower of a vessel under the captain, so that the *πηγέταις*, the ministers of Christ, so far from being here represented as foreign plenipotentiaries, are represented as laborious rowers of that sacred vessel, the Church of Christ; his servants, by whose honored labor the vessel of the Church is rowed onward in her course.

In conformity with this, the Apostle Paul says, "We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." There are but two passages in which the word ambassador is used, one of them in Ephesians vi. 20, where Paul says, that for the gospel he is an ambassador in bonds; and the other in second Cor. v. 20, where Paul says that the ministers of Christ are ambassadors to *beseech* men to be reconciled to God. There seem to have been some persons, even in Paul's own day, dissatisfied with this remarkable humility of the apostle. They thought he degraded his office in making himself the servant of all. They demanded that their minister should assume more dignity, glory, lordship, authority, magnificence; and they were so fond of it, that rather than not enjoy the spectacle, they were willing it should be exercised over themselves. And Paul had to excuse himself to them for being so economical in his habits, and for taking so little of the airs of authority upon him. He

was not burdensome to them. Forgive me, said he, this wrong. There were men glorying after the flesh, whom the Corinthians were delighted with on account of their proud pretensions. Such puffing and swelling in the ministers made the people think themselves much greater than before. They were delighted with such foolery. "Ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise. For ye suffer it, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face." Never was depicted more to the life the characteristics of pretension and aggrandizement on the one side, and cringing servility and admiration on the other. And what was the consequence? Just what Paul feared; debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults.

THE MINISTRATION OF THE SPIRIT NOT AN APOSTOLICAL  
SUCCESSION.

In the early simplicity of Christianity, ministers sprang *from* the church *for* the church, and so must they ever do. It might be doubted if in the whole first century of Christianity there was a single instance in which any church possessed a minister, who was not at first one of its own simple members. When men became, by the new creation of the Holy Spirit, Christians, they had in themselves the germ of future ministers. If they desired the office of a bishop, they might, if need be, become bishops, on being proved to possess the simple holy qualifications enumerated by Paul. So far as they were faithful Christians, they were all

preachers of the word. It had been promised by the Lord Jesus that not apostles merely, but believers, should speak with tongues. It had been promised in the Old Testament, that not to Priests and Levites, should public spiritual gifts, or the privilege of exercising them be restricted, but that upon all should the Spirit be poured out ; sons and daughters, young men and old, even servants and hand-maidens should see visions and prophesy ; this should be the ministration no longer of a Levitical, nor an apostolical succession, but the ministration of the Spirit, a new, free, glorious dispensation. And so it was, and so it came to pass. And hence, hardly three years had elapsed, and the first Christian church in the world, the church at Jerusalem, had but become established and numerous, under the government and teaching of the Apostles, when, except the Apostles, they were all scattered abroad throughout the region of Judea and Samaria, **PREACHING THE WORD.** They went even to Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch. Who were they, and what was their commission as preachers of the gospel ? They were simple Christians, but they were the royal priesthood of Jesus Christ. No hand of Levite, priest, or bishop had touched them, but the Spirit of the Lord God was upon them, and they were all preachers, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

And this was the way in which the Lord Jesus had determined beforehand to form and spread the Christian church ; not by a Levitical mould in a new form to be called the apostolical succession, but by the unfettered freedom of the dispensation of the Spirit ; not by men on whom the Apostles' hands had been laid, or who

had been commissioned by the Apostles, as if through them alone was to descend the unction of a new priesthood, but by men who, in their own right as Christians, though every one of the Apostles had died as soon as the church at Jerusalem was formed, were kings and priests unto God ; by simple Christians, simple members of the church, some of whom perhaps had not even begun to exercise their gifts in the social meetings of their own native church, who had been never dreamed of by the Apostles as preachers, far less set apart by any imaginable form of consecration. But it took the fire of a persecution to make them understand this free and sublime genius of the new dispensation. They would have continued fettered by the narrow genius of Judaism ; they would very likely have established a Hierarchical church on the old ambitious foundation, and a new Levitico-Apostolico-Christian order ; they might have appointed one of the Apostles as the High Priest, and so the first Pope would have been elected not at Rome, but at Jerusalem ; and the bugbear of apostolical succession would have been among the first, as it was among the latest of the corruptions of Christianity. Such, I say, would in all probability have been the consequences of numbers, indolence, ambition, and worldly prosperity. Had they stayed much longer at Jerusalem, the old quarrel for supremacy between Zebedee's children and the rest of the disciples would in all probability have broken out anew, and that strife for lordship, which constituted the essence of the Hierarchical Despotism for ages, would have begun on the spot where our blessed Lord washed his disciples' feet.

But He who knoweth what is in man, and who per-

haps already saw the germinations of ecclesiastical ambition in this great successful church in Jerusalem, and that those many thousand disciples had forgotten for what purpose they were called, even to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, interposed in his providence, and permitted a violent persecution to scatter them in every direction, preaching the word. So they had to go, unfortunate, uncommissioned men, without the benefit of the apostolical succession. Not one of them could show a license, not one possessed an Apostolical Diploma, and (most melancholy defalcation) except the six persons who had been appointed to settle the pecuniary difficulties between the Grecians and the Hebrews, not one had ever the hand of an Apostle laid on him. Nevertheless, forth they went, and that persecution, in the formation of churches as independent as the church at Jerusalem, put a stop to the Hierarchical Despotism for more than two hundred years. They went everywhere, preaching the word. How greatly it is to be lamented, that as they were busied from region to region gaining converts and gathering churches, some incarnation of the modern apostolical succession could not have been present to denounce such assemblies as unhallowed conventicles, and to say, There can be no church without a Bishop ! They went everywhere, preaching the word. Who were these men, that thus dared to preach out of the regular line of apostolical succession ? Some of them were carpenters, and some were tent-makers, and some were armorers, and others were tanners, and others were fishermen, and tax-gatherers. Some were Greeks, some Jews, some Romans. Some of them

were from Cyprus and Cyrene, and coming to the city of Antioch, these men, having a kindness to their countrymen, preached to the Grecians—preached the Lord Jesus; they preached, though never ordained, and what is more, the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. Here then was a church, and here were ministers, neither of whom had ever in their lives looked upon that thing of modern Hierarchical worship, a bishop.

But what I wish now to speak of particularly is the fact that these preachers, these ministers of Christ, sprang out of the church. When the disciples from Jerusalem had, by the Spirit of God, gained a sufficient number of converts, they formed churches, and out of these churches were chosen the future ministers of these churches. They were chosen, without any question, in the same way in which the Apostles at Jerusalem had set the example of such selections, when men were to be appointed for office, by the brethren of the church looking out among themselves such men as were signalized for faith and the gifts of the Spirit, and appointing such to be their overseers. So the churches were not only churches while without bishops, but they made their own bishops. And those that did not do so in the first instance, or were content for some time mutually to worship and edify one another as the Spirit gave them utterance, did so afterwards, at the instance of Barnabas and Paul. It was not Barnabas and Paul, it was not any of the Apostles who selected for the churches men to be their teachers; it was the churches themselves, who chose for themselves, out of their own number, such men as they had found endowed with

the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and these men were made their elders. In that same church at Antioch were prophets and teachers, on whom no apostles' hands had ever been laid in consecration. These men were not the less the ministers of Christ for that.

THE HIERARCHICAL VIEW OF THE MINISTRY CORRUPT AND  
UNSCRIPTURAL.

Through the influence of the Hierarchical Despotism there has, in fact, come to be a complete corruption in men's ideas in regard to the relative power and position of the ministry and the church. It is the church which is the body of Christ, and the ministry come out of it. The church does not come out of the ministry, but out of Christ ; the church does not depend upon the ministry for its existence, but upon Christ. So far from its being, in any sense whatever, true, that there can be no church without a bishop, the truth is, that there can be no bishop, no minister, pastor, elder, without a church. A preacher of the gospel there might be, before there was any church in existence ; the very first person converted by the Saviour might have been made by him a preacher of the gospel, before there was another believer in existence. But such an one could not be a bishop, an elder, without a church, in and over which alone there could be the office of a bishop. The order is evidently this ; first believers, then preachers of the gospel, then churches, then bishops or elders. Where there are believers, there, in the highest, most universal, most glorious sense, is the church of Christ, and preachers of the gospel must come out of that church, and bishops and

elders must come out of that church, and not that church out of bishops. Wherever there are believers in Christ, there, in those believers, are the ministers of Christ, if he chooses them as such ; and he chooses them, or none. They are a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, to show forth his praises, and of them, and for them, he chooses his overseers of the flock.

This, it is manifest, is the view taken by the Apostle Peter, when he says to believers, “ Ye are built up, a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” “ As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God ; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.” The exhortations are given to believers in general, besides his exhortations to the elders, to feed the flock of God. To the same general purpose is that passage in the epistle to the Philippians, “ And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.” To the same purpose is that declaration in the Revelation of John, “ The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come.” There is nothing clearer than this, that the members of the primitive apostolic churches, just so far as they were faithful to Christ, all considered themselves, everywhere, as in a most important sense preachers of the

word ; and such preachers were the precious stuff out of which bishops or elders were made. The overseers and preachers of the church came out of the church, and not the church out of its overseers. So that if, at any time, the whole ministry had been swept away by death, a new ministry could be raised out of that body of Christ whence the first ministry emanated. Hence it is not necessary to maintain an uninterrupted succession in the ministry ; and, in point of fact, it can be shown, that there has not been such an uninterrupted succession ; there having been a long and dreary night and chaos of wickedness in the undisputed reign of Antichrist, in which it cannot be proved that any of those called the ministers of Christ were ever employed in that work which constitutes the office of the ministry, preaching the word. But a succession of true believers might exist, the church of Christ might exist, though all the so-called ministers of Christ were wolves in sheep's clothing. And it is the church, of which Christ has promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ; and out of the church Christ can, in the darkest times, as among the Waldenses, raise up faithful witnesses and preachers, though no human hand was ever laid upon them in ordination. The continued existence of the church is a security of the succession of the ministry ; and not the succession of the ministry a security of the existence of the church. The existence of the church depends upon the word and the Spirit of God ; and the existence of the ministry depends on the existence of the church, and must come out of the church.

## FOURTH SOPHISM CONNECTED WITH THE WORD ORDINATION.

(IV.) The next point of sophistry to be noted respects the word ordination, which hoary, hierarchical usage has as much entangled and furbelowed with sea-weed as the word bishop. The absurd ideas prevalent in regard to it, and the usages founded thereon, so contrary to the usage of the primitive churches, make it a matter of great importance to go to the bottom, and find what it really means. The ambition of hierarchists and churchmen has attached so many solemn fungi to the simplicity of the faith of the Gospel, that, in cutting them away, you seem, to some minds, as if you were cutting away the Gospel itself. If a man, having an enormous wen hanging at the end of his nose, should succeed in persuading himself and others, that this wen was the perfection of humanity, and that all men's noses ought to be made to hang out in such a bag-like excrescence, this nasal fanaticism could not be a greater absurdity, than the pretence that prelates are essentials to the being of a church, or prelatical ordination to the being of the Christian ministry.

I shall show, first, that ordination by laying on of hands is not necessary to constitute a Christian minister; second, that ordination by other Christian ministers is not necessary to constitute such a minister; and, third, that the appointment of one of their own number by any Christian church, in accordance with the requisites for the character of a bishop laid down in Paul's epistle to Timothy, is all that *is* necessary to constitute a true Heaven-commissioned Christian min-

ister. I shall show these points one by one with the utmost clearness.

#### DISTINCTION BETWEEN EXPEDIENCY AND DIVINE RIGHT.

But here let it be distinctly marked, that I distinguish between what may be deemed expedient by different churches, and under different forms of church polity, and what can be shown to be *necessary* from the Word of God; between what may be deemed necessary now, as a matter of expediency, precaution, or otherwise, and what was evidently necessary as a matter of inspiration and divine authority. The Presbyterians may, for centuries, have adopted a form of government which, among themselves, makes ordination by other ministers necessary to the ministerial commission. And hence it would be the highest disorder for any man among them to assume that commission without such ordination. The Congregationalists may have adopted a similar order, so that it would be disorderly and injurious not to adhere to it. The Episcopilians may have adopted a similar order, restricting, however, the whole essence of the ministerial function to the virtue hidden in the palm of a prelatical bishop. But ordination in neither of these forms is essential to the Christian ministry, because, in neither of them can it be shown to be of divine obligation, of the nature of a divine precept.

#### MEANING OF THE WORD ORDINATION.

Now, first, as to the sophism connected with the word ordination: the idea commonly connected with it is

that of a mysterious transfer of gifts, powers, functions, the passing of a sort of ecclesiastical electricity in that transaction, not received, possessed, or experienced before. Would any of my hearers, accustomed at all to the hierarchical use of the word ordain, or ordination, ever dream that the meaning of the word in the New Testament is simply and solely appoint, or appointment? We have come very generally to signify by it the ceremony of inauguration into the office of the ministry, or investiture therewith. But disintegrated from all hierarchical excrescences, and reduced to its New Testament simplicity, it means simply *appointment*; and this, first, either by divine authority, special, extraordinary, or by the choice of the churches, or, lastly, by such choice with the ratification of the miraculously endowed officers of the New Testament churches. But that there are no directions whatever as to any mode of ordination, which was to be binding on the churches, any particular mode as fixed of God, is so clear, that the most fanatical hierarchs have never pretended that there were.

ORDINATION IN THE WORD *Kαθιστημι.*

The two principal words, from which our English word “ordain” is derived in this connection, are these, namely, *καθιστημι* and *χειροτονέω*. The first of these words occurs in Titus i. 5, *καταστησῆς*, appoint elders in every city; and means simply *appoint, establish*, or, if you please, *set in office*. But no form, no ceremony, is included in the meaning, or connected with it. There is nothing of the prelatrical signification of

the word ordain. Titus was no Bishop, never ordained as such, but a special, extraordinary assistant of the Apostle, commissioned and endowed by him to act in his place, and do what he would have done, as an extraordinary officer of Christ, with extraordinary powers as an Evangelist, in the establishment and arrangement of government, order and discipline in the infant churches. That done, his own office and authority were not to be perpetuated, plainly, because they would no longer be needed; so that, whereas Titus was to appoint elders in every city, he was not to appoint Evangelists, not any such extraordinary officers as his own office of special assistance to the Apostles, nor was any provision to be made, nor were any directions given, for the future appointment or perpetuity of such offices, nor in point of fact were any such directions *ever* given, or any such offices *ever* established.

Titus evidently had the same office as Timothy, and neither of them, there is the least reason to believe, were ever ordained Bishops; both were extraordinary fellow-laborers with the Apostles, of whose precise office, that no pattern was to be left in the churches, is perfectly plain, in that none was left, nor any directions given, nor any powers committed to any persons for this purpose. No person would dare take upon himself this authority of Titus, without precisely the same commission as Titus; and that it was felt and acknowledged as an extraordinary commission is manifest, in that no person contemporary with, or after him, did take upon himself the same commission. No one person pretended to have or to exercise a similar

authority in appointing elders. And every man in his senses must have reasoned thus : If Paul had meant that other persons in succession should exercise the authority of Titus, he would necessarily have added, as he was careful to do in regard to the truth of the gospel to be preached, This same power of appointing elders, and this same power of setting in order the things that are wanting, commit thou to another person also, with a commandment to him to commit it to his successor : and this would have been the perfection of the Hierarchical Despotism to begin with ; this would have been to constitute the infant church as a consummate finished Papacy. For the power of appointing the officers of any body or polity, is supreme power over that body or polity.

We do not, however, admit, that even in the case of Titus this word, *καταστησῆς*, signifies in him supreme authority, but, as is proved by the usage of the New Testament churches, and by the custom of the Apostles in their own exercise of this authority, an appointment by and with the consent of the churches ; the churches signifying whom they would have to be their ministers, their elders, what persons there were proved among them to be men of faith and blameless, whom the Apostles then inaugurated in their office, ratifying with prayer the choice of the body of believers. This same word, *καθιστημι*, is used in Acts vi. 3, in a way which proves this allegation. And this was manifestly necessary, inasmuch as the Apostles, in passing among the churches to ordain elders, could not be supposed, without an immediate miraculous revelation from God, to know what persons in the churches had been proved

blameless and suitable for the office. And that they did not rely upon such miraculous revelation in such cases is clear from Acts vi. 3, where, in a matter of much less moment, and in a case which would inevitably, in some respects, constitute a precedent for the after usage of the churches in the appointment of officers, they said to the multitude of the brethren, *Look ye out among yourselves men suitable to the office*; relying not upon their own inspiration, nor claiming any power of appointment by themselves, but appealing to the people, the brethren, the church, the honored body of Christ. Of course the Spirit of Christ always dwells in that body, and guides it, and the wisdom of selection and the authority of appointment must always dwell in that body under its Great Head; and its officers must spring out from itself, according to its own wants, and the dictate of its Head; just as the hand springs from the body, and is not attached to it, or set upon it, by a foreign creation, by a separate power.

So much for the meaning of ordination in that word *παθιστημι*. It is simply an appointment, and no transfer or communication of ministerial power, or ministerial inspiration, or ministerial holiness, or ministerial gifts in any way. It is a simple appointment, on the ground of those gifts having been observed as an endowment by the Holy Spirit, in persons thus marked and sealed as it were, as suitable subjects of such appointment. It is no transfer, or communication of such gifts, nor any transfer of any power of office; for God has not committed the power of making such a transfer to any individual; the power is in the office, if a

person be appointed to it, but it does not and cannot pass over to the person from other persons, as a hidden, invisible, mysterious conveyance. Nothing of the kind takes place. The person appointed to the office, receives such power in the office from the Lord Jesus Christ, and not from the persons appointing him ; if they choose to give him a power over themselves, which is not in the office, very well ; if any particular church, in selecting and appointing a minister on the ground of certain ministerial qualifications evidently possessed, should say, in addition to the power connected by the Lord Jesus with the office of the ministry for our edification and not for our destruction, we commit to you supreme authority over our church edifice and rites of worship, to alter or increase the same at your pleasure ; this would be a totally different thing ; but this does not belong to the office. This is a particular agreement, which any particular church may make, if it pleases, with its minister ; any particular church polity may even incorporate such a thing into its "standards," as they are called, in any article drawn up in regard to its ministry ; but this can never touch the office of a minister of Christ, can never be incorporated with it, though all the "standards" of all the churches in the world were to insist upon it.

#### ORDINATION AS INDICATED BY THE WORD *Xειροτονέω*.

We come to the next word applied to the appointment, or as we say ordination of elders in the New Testament, *χειροτονίσαντες*, and the examination of it invincibly strengthens and confirms our argument on the

word used in the Epistle to Titus, *καταστῆσαις*. For, the meaning of this word, *χειροτονέω*, is, incontrovertibly, to choose by holding up the hands, to choose and appoint by vote, and so, to ordain, appoint, constitute. The use of the word connects it with popular suffrage. So it is used in 2 Cor. viii. 19, of the appointment of those persons who were *chosen of the Churches* to travel with Paul, *χειροτονηθεῖς*. In the other place, Acts xiv. 23, where it is used of the appointment of elders in the churches, the selection of this particular word most manifestly points to the choice of the churches, as the mode in which Barnabas and Saul appointed those officers. The literal interpretation is this, namely, And when they had appointed for them by vote elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, &c. Or, as it is the participle, *χειροτονήσαντες*, it would be a more literal rendering to say, Selecting or appointing for them by vote, &c. As to the manner of this election Calvin remarks on 2 Cor. viii. 19, as follows :—  
*Notanda autem est species electionis, χειροτονία scilicet Græcis usitata: in qua præbant auctoritate et consilio primores, totamque actionem gubernabant: plebs autem sciscebat:* It was the manner customary in Greece in which, the leaders or nobles presided over the whole transaction, and the people voted.

#### MANNER OF BARNABAS AND SAUL IN APPOINTING ELDERS.

Just thus, without any question, was the manner of Barnabas and Saul in the appointment of elders. We argue powerfully that it was, from the instance of

appointment in Acts vi. 3, where the word is *καταστήσομεν*, but the appointment was by the choice of the brethren. Much more here, where the word used is that which was always applied to the act of choosing by vote, does the appointment of elders by Barnabas and Saul point to the same mode of popular suffrage. There was, at that time, too much Christian confidence and love to proceed otherwise, and it is evident that even if Paul had felt as if he could with propriety, by virtue of the authority given him by the Lord Jesus, appoint elders without consultation or choice of the people, he would not have done it. He would have chosen rather to show his trust in them as Christians, and leave it with them to select for their rulers those whom they would approve, and their choice he would sanction. Indeed, if an assembly of Christians, with the Divine Spirit in their hearts and the love of Christ guiding them, are not to be trusted with the choice, and so with the appointment, of their ministers, much less are one or two or a few individuals to be so trusted. The appointment of elders apart from the choice of the people was not an act of sovereignty likely to be assumed by Paul, nor in point of fact was it assumed by any of the Apostles, it being the universal custom in that age, and the age following, for the people to choose their own clergy. Of the interference of a bishop, or bench of bishops, they knew nothing. Ordination with them was simple appointment to office, and no mysterious sacramental transfer of sacredness.

You will remark, that in the ordination of elders by Barnabas and Saul, there was no laying on of hands; a fact sufficient of itself to prove our first allegation,

that the laying on of hands is not necessary to the office of a Christian Minister, nor any necessary part of his induction into such office. Nor is there any instance in the New Testament, in which Christian Ministers, or Presbyters, or Bishops, ever were so inducted into office. It will not do to *conjecture* that they were so inducted; you may conjecture that in the case of the appointment of elders by Barnabas and Saul, they laid their hands on them, but there is not the least ground for supposing that they did. You might just as well *conjecture* that they poured a flask of consecrated oil upon their heads, and you would have just as much argument to support the supposition. If they had done either, it would in all probability have been mentioned. Some things are mentioned which they did do, as fasting and praying, but there is no word of the laying on of hands. Now as there is always so much particularity in mentioning this ceremony, wherever it took place, we have the strongest ground for concluding that as it is never mentioned in connection with the ordination of elders, it never did take place. And still more certainly do we come to the conclusion that if it is not mentioned at all, it is not mentioned as necessary, not delivered as a binding ceremony, without which a minister of Christ cannot be a minister. That the elders laid their hands on Timothy, for his appointment to office, is clear; but that the laying on of Timothy's or Paul's hands, was necessary to constitute an elder, is nowhere asserted, and nowhere intimated.

## CASES OF TIMOTHY AND TITUS.

The idea of the ordination of Timothy and Titus, as bishops, seems to have originated in the spurious addition appended to Paul's epistles to them, stating that they were ordained first bishops of Ephesus and Crete. There is not the least reason to suppose that either of them was ever ordained bishop, or considered as such. Bishops, in the prelatical, episcopal sense, they could not have been, for such an office was not then in existence, and the word *ἐπίσκοπος* will bear no such meaning, being precisely the same as *πρεσβύτερος*. Neither is there the least reason to suppose that they were ever ordained bishops or elders in the New Testament sense, but many reasons which forbid such a supposition, which forbid the supposition that they were connected with any particular church whatsoever. Nevertheless, the word used in the appendage to the epistles of Paul most strongly confirms our argument as to the manner of the ordination of elders or bishops by popular suffrage, that word being, in each case, *χειροτονηθέντα*, appointed by vote. Whatever office it was to which the writer supposes Timothy and Titus to have been ordained, the ordination was evidently a popular appointment, and not a presentation by a bishop.

In regard to those spurious subscriptions, from which principally has arisen the idea of Timothy and Titus being bishops of Ephesus and Crete, I need only quote what Dr. Paley says of them in his admirable work, the *Horæ Paulinæ*. "Six of these subscriptions," says he, "are false or improbable; that is, they are either contradicted by the contents of the epistle, or are diffi-

cult to be reconciled with them." Among these six he reckons those to the first epistle to Timothy, and the epistle to Titus.

"The First Epistle to Timothy the subscription asserts to have been sent from Laodicea; yet, when St. Paul writes, 'I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, πορευόμενος εἰς Μακεδονίαν (when I set out for Macedonia'), the reader is naturally led to conclude, that he wrote the letter upon his arrival in that country.

"The Epistle to Titus is dated from Nicopolis in Macedonia, whilst no city of that name is known to have existed in that province.

"The use, and the only use, which I make of these observations, is to show how easily errors and contradictions steal in where the writer is not guided by original knowledge. There are only eleven distinct assignments of date to St. Paul's Epistles (for the four written from Rome may be considered as plainly contemporary); and of these, six seem to be erroneous. I do not attribute any authority to these subscriptions. I believe them to have been conjectures, founded sometimes upon loose traditions, but more generally upon a consideration of some particular text, without sufficiently comparing it with other parts of the epistle, with different epistles, or with the history. Suppose, then, that the subscriptions had come down to us as authentic parts of the epistles, there would have been more contrarieties and difficulties arising out of these final verses, than from all the rest of the volume. Yet, if the epistles had been forged, the whole must have been made up of the same elements as those of which the subscriptions are composed, viz., tradition, conjecture, and inference; and it would have remained to be accounted for how, whilst so many errors were crowded into the concluding clauses of the letters, so much consistency should be preserved in other parts."

Timothy is known to have been an Evangelist. Of

the manner of his appointment to that office we have no account ; but we have the mention, by Paul, of peculiar gifts which were in him by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, and the laying on of Paul's own hands. Thus, in 1 Tim. iv. 14, it is said, " Neglect not the gift which is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hand of the Presbytery." And in 2 Tim. i. 6, it is said, " That thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." Now, on the comparison of these with other passages, where the laying on of hands is mentioned, especially Acts viii. 17, 20, and Acts xix. 6, we have the same expression as is used by Paul to Timothy, *the gift of God* ; and we find it was such an ostensible gift of the Holy Ghost, doubtless in miraculous power, that Simon Magus desired to purchase it with money. It was certainly not the ordinary spiritual influences of the Holy Spirit ; for it was a gift in addition to those influences, it being baptized believers on whom it was conferred ; and it was something that gave extraordinary power, which tempted Simon Magus to try and purchase it. How many bishoprics have been bought in the same manner ! And how many persons in the so-called apostolical succession have been merely in the succession of simony, receiving the pretended gift from men in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity ! Indeed, the succession of Simon Magus can be far more clearly established in the church, than that of the Apostles.

In the second passage, from Acts xix. 1—6, we have a still more explicit interpretation of the nature of that gift of the Holy Ghost thus communicated by

the laying on of hands. For, first, it is *disciples* who already possessed the ordinary converting influences of the Holy Spirit, to whom it was given ; and second, it is said expressly, that “ when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them ; *and they spake with tongues and prophesied.*” This then was the gift which Simon Magus desired to purchase, and this was one of the gifts which was in Timothy by the laying on of Paul’s hands. But there is not a single passage, which intimates that the laying on of the Apostles’ hands was necessary for ministerial ordination. Much more did it never convey the converting influences of the Holy Spirit. Where there was faith already, it evidently conveyed a miraculous power.

#### CASES OF BARNABAS AND SAUL.

Several other passages remain to be examined, from which it is evident, first, that so far as the laying on of hands constituted any kind of ordination, it was performed indiscriminately by apostles, prophets, teachers and lay Christians ; a fact fatal to the assumption of the power of ordination by any one class ; second, that it was not essential to the office of a preacher of the gospel ; third, that there were men publicly recognized as preachers, of whom there is no reason whatever to believe that any form of ordination whatever was practised in regard to them.

The first of these passages is Acts xiii. 1—3, “ Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers ; as Barnabas and Simeon, that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen,

which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and *laid their hands on them*, they sent them away.” From this passage it is proved, first, that simple prophets and teachers, of whom there is no reason whatever to suppose that they had ever received themselves any ordination from any apostle or apostles, or bishops or elders, or any officers at all, could themselves ordain others. From a comparison of Acts xi. 19, 20, this Lucius of Cyrene seems to have been one of the members of the Church at Jerusalem scattered abroad by the persecution, and like the other members of that Church, preaching the word. He had had no ordination himself, but with his fellow prophets and teachers, was called upon by the Holy Ghost to ordain Barnabas and Saul.

It is proved, second, from this passage, that ordination was not necessary to constitute ministers of Christ, for Barnabas and Saul were both evidently ministers, *before* they themselves received this ordination. They were ministers, and had acted as ministers for a long time. Paul had preached at Damascus and in other places, and Barnabas, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, had had much people added to the Lord under his own ministry. But there is no hint that either of them had been ordained. If, however, it be asserted that Paul had received such ordination, then the examination of the passage, in which it is recorded, is likewise fatal to the hypothesis of Episcopilians, and completely oversets from its foundation the assumption

that ordination can be performed only by men in the ministry, or in the apostolical succession ; for this first ordination of Paul was by a layman ! The passage is in Acts ix. 10—20. We now proceed to the examination of it, and we find it perfectly fatal to the assumptions of Episcopalians in every shape.

It seems from this passage that there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias. There were other disciples at Damascus, but they do not seem, as yet, to have separated themselves from the Jewish Synagogues, or to have been constituted into a church. They were simply disciples, having no office whatever, but to be lay-preachers, as all the disciples were, holding forth the word of life as they had opportunity. Ananias was simply a disciple, having no commission from the Apostles, no ordination in any way, and perhaps having never seen an apostle. But he was a disciple of Christ. To this man Paul was sent, that he might receive ordination, and be, by this disciple, baptized ! The account of both ceremonies is as follows : “ And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house, and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales ; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.”

Now comparing this passage with Paul’s own account of the transaction, in the 22d chapter of Acts, you have additional evidence of the relation of the parties, and some proof that Paul himself looked back

to this transaction as his own setting apart to the ministry. View it in whatever way you choose, it is fatal to the hypothesis of Episcopacy. If you say that he *was* ordained, then it is evident that an apostle was ordained by a layman, and what happened in one case might happen in another. If you say that he was *not* ordained, then he entered on his ministry and exercised it without any ordination ; or, if that later transaction was his ordination a number of years afterwards, when with Barnabas he was set apart by the prophets and teachers in Antioch, then again you have the ordination of an apostle by those who had not themselves been ordained. The difficulty is inextricable, the case utterly subversive of all pretensions to an apostolical succession.

#### CASE OF THE SEVEN APPOINTED TO SERVE TABLES.

The next instance of ordination to which our argument brings us, is the first on record, and exceedingly important, as showing, even in a case in which there was the laying on of hands by the Apostles, that the appointment was by the popular vote, and not a pre-latical presentation. This was the appointment in Acts vi. 1—6, of seven persons who were to settle a quarrel between the Grecians and the Hebrews, and to take charge of the business of the daily distribution of the moneys of the common stock. This was the special business, with which the Apostles themselves would not be burdened, and therefore called upon the brethren of the church to look out from themselves seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wis-

dom, whom they might appoint over this business. Accordingly, they proceeded to the election, and chose seven persons, among whom were Stephen and Philip, and on whom the Apostles laid their hands and prayed. The officers thus created are nowhere called deacons ; they might rather be called treasurers, for they were chosen for the one particular purpose of looking after the pecuniary distributions. For Episcopalian to assert, as they do, that here is an authority for their third order in the ministry, is precisely to do the work of forgery with the sacred oracles. It is just as if a man, having a ten pound note in his possession (£10) should deliberately sit down and add a cypher (£100), and then pass it for a hundred pounds. For, the advocates of episcopacy take here an appointment for a specified charge and business, no way connected with the Christian ministry, and make out of it for themselves another order in that ministry ! But these men were neither appointed to preach, nor were hands laid on them in token of any transfer of ministerial power ; nor was this laying on of hands a transmission to them of the gift of the Holy Ghost ; for it was performed in regard to those who were already full of the Holy Ghost, eminent for their gifts and graces, and who must have exercised those gifts and graces, in order to have been known as thus eminent. And they continued to exercise them, but not specially in consequence of this ordination, for they were abundantly fitted to teach and to preach Jesus. And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. He preached the gospel with a power that was irresistible, but evidently not in

consequence of his ordination, which was an appointment to a business totally different from that of preaching.

Just so it was with Philip. There was no second ordination of this individual, that we are informed of, and in this first ordination he was not appointed a preacher; and yet in the persecution that followed upon the death of Stephen, he went down to Samaria and preached Christ there. And so were the whole church scattered abroad, and went everywhere, PREACHING THE WORD. All the ordination they had was the sacred fire of persecution burning upon them, but they were preachers of the gospel, they were ministers of Christ, and some of them, as we have seen, were afterwards employed in appointing or ordaining Barnabas and Saul to their special mission among the churches. So much honor will God set upon the gifts and graces of his own Spirit; for it was these gifts and graces, that made these men prophets and teachers, and no act of human appointment or ordination. And it was these gifts in them, and not any previous ordination, which marked them as the instruments of the Holy Spirit in sealing, marking, setting apart, ordaining, if you please, the two ministers of Christ, Barnabas and Saul, for the work to which God had called them.

THE CASE OF APOLLOS CONSIDERED, BEING BY ITSELF ALONE  
A REFUTATION OF THE ASSUMPTIONS OF EPISCOPACY.

There is one passage more, of sufficient importance in our argument to note at length, and that contains

the history of Apollos, a minister of Christ without any ordination by any other ministers, indeed, without any ordination whatever, but ranked by Paul himself as being as much a minister as he was. The passage is in Acts xviii. 24—28, compared with Acts xix. 1, and I. Corinthians iii. 5. Apollos was an eloquent Jew of Alexandria, a disciple of John the Baptist, mighty in the Scriptures, and though only partially instructed in the way of the Lord, yet a fervent, diligent, powerful preacher. He certainly had never met any one of the Apostles, for he knew nothing but the baptism of John; he was without ordination, for not a single minister of Christ had met him, until he came to Ephesus, where Paul had left Aquila, likewise a Jew, with his wife Priscilla, who afterwards had a church in their house in Rome. The moment Apollos came to Ephesus, he began to teach in the synagogues; and then Aquila and Priscilla, having listened to him and noted his fervid eloquence, took him, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. This, manifestly, was the only approximation to an ordination, that this man ever had, this exposition and instruction by the tent-maker Aquila and his wife. But under the guidance of the Holy Spirit he exercised his gifts for the edification of believers. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote (the brethren, mark you, and no bishops), exhorting the disciples to receive him; that is, the Corinthian disciples, Paul having recently spent a year and a half in Corinth, so that there were many believers. To Corinth, therefore, Apollos came, and helped the brethren much, which had believed through grace, for

he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

Now here, clearly, was a distinguished minister of Christ without ordination. He knew nothing of the apostolical succession ; he did not even know a single apostle ; no prelatrical hand had been laid upon him. Poor man ! He was out of the line of the succession, and yet a powerful minister of Jesus Christ ! But perhaps some one may ask, How do you know but that Paul himself may have ordained Apollos ? And here our argument is perfect, and the refutation of the episcopal hypothesis, with its arrogant assumption, complete and entire ; for Paul calls Apollos a minister of Christ before he had even seen or known him, calls him a minister at the time when, after the instructions he received from Aquila and Priscilla, he passed over into Corinth and preached Christ there. Referring to that very preaching of Apollos in Corinth, which under God had produced much fruit in men converted, Paul asks, Who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but MINISTERS, by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man ?

Now a more triumphant refutation of the absurd dogma of the apostolical succession or ordination could not be conceived than this, out of the mouth of the Holy Scriptures. For here is a man, whom Paul declares to be, like himself, a minister of Christ, concerning whom we do really know that he never received ordination at all, much less from any apostle, or any man or men ordained by an apostle. Yet he was as much a minister of Christ as Paul was, and if any church had chosen him as one of their bishops or elders, it would have needed no other ap-

pointment for his ordination; this appointment itself was an ordination. There might have been, and there might not have been, after it, in concurrence with it, prayer and fasting on the part of the presbytery; but the appointment would have been the ordination, for ordination means appointment, nothing else; and Apollos, being a minister of Christ before such appointment or ordination, could not have been any more a minister of Christ after such appointment or ordination. If, in token and recognition of such appointment, the hands of the presbytery had been laid upon him, it could not have been for the conveyance of any ministerial gifts or qualifications, for he had them all before, as completely as Paul himself. Nor can it be shown from any passage whatever, that Paul and Barnabas, or any other persons, in appointing or ordaining elders in the churches, ever laid hands upon them. There is not a solitary instance, in which this ceremony is mentioned as accompanying the ordination of elders. And certainly when pastors are ordained now, the laying on of hands cannot be shown to have anything essential in it whatever. It conveys nothing, for the gift of miracles does not follow it; and the converting gift of the Holy Ghost is not conveyed with it, nor ever was, nor ever will be. In the time of the Apostles, it certainly conveyed not the right or privilege of preaching the gospel, for this was conceded without it; and from the 12th, 13th and 14th chapters of the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, it is clear beyond all contradiction, that the members of the church indiscriminately preached and spake with tongues. "Ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all be

comforted. Wherefore, brethren, covet not to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues."

These facts, now reasoned from, give no scope whatever to that wildness of modern radicalism, which would break down the distinctions between the ministry and the church of Christ. I am simply showing, from the way in which the primitive churches of Christ arose, and from the incontrovertible fact that there were preachers of the gospel, admitted and acknowledged as such, without ordination by the Apostles, the absurdity, nay, the impossibility of the assumed apostolical succession, and of the connected assumption that there can be no church without a bishop. The order of the ministry being established by Christ, no man may, in reckless presumption and disregard of appointed forms and requisite qualifications, rush into it; and there is a wide distinction between preaching the gospel, and being made by the Holy Ghost the overseer or bishop of a particular church. Whatever forms are laid down in the gospel are to be sacredly adhered to; nor can any man, unauthorized, assume to himself the dignity, the privileges, or the office of a minister of Christ.

CONSTITUTION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES APPLIED TO TEST THE DOGMA, NO CHURCH WITHOUT A BISHOP.

There is one other form, of very great power, in which we may state our argument, occasioned by the assertion of the prelatists, founded on the sophisms which I have endeavored to expose, that there can be no

church without a bishop, meaning a prelatical or diocesan bishop, the oyster, and not the pearl. The assertion is most recklessly and inadvertently unrestricted, so that it runs back to the earliest period of the Christian dispensation. Now there are none but must admit that what was a church then may be a church now ; and therefore if we could find but one single church in the New Testament without a bishop, yet recognized of the Holy Spirit as a church, this would be fatal to the assertion and assumption of prelatical episcopacy. To determine this matter we must turn to the New Testament, and examine the constitution of the churches there.

#### THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM.

Take then, first of all, the church at Jerusalem. Take it at the first moment in which it is named, Acts ii. 47, And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. There was, at this time, no precedence among the Apostles ; no officers had been appointed, not even elders ; yet the Spirit of God names the assembly of believers at Jerusalem THE CHURCH. Now, the most unflinching, reckless advocate of diocesan episcopacy will hardly assert that at this time this church had a diocesan bishop. It had the twelve Apostles to take care of it, but no bishop. Was it a church, or was it not ? Who was the bishop of that diocese ? Where, how, and by whom was he ordained ? The idle dream that James may have been a diocesan bishop, is so perfectly gratuitous, and without all proof, that it deserves not to be noticed. I might

as appropriately dream that Barnabas or Silas, "chief men among the brethren" was my lord bishop of Jerusalem, as Peter, James, or John. If this system is to be enforced upon the churches, at the peril of their excommunication, you must tell us where, when, and how it arose, you must give us texts of Scripture for it, and show us diocesan bishops in the earliest constitution of the Christian churches. Otherwise, when we find the Holy Spirit declaring that to be a church over which it is demonstrable and indisputable that there was no such governor as a diocesan bishop, we must take the Holy Spirit for our guide, and the Bible for our authority, and no episcopal assumptions or traditions.

Take this same church at a later period, Acts xv. 4. "And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of THE CHURCH, and of the Apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them." In this advanced period we find, besides Apostles, *elders* in this church, but still, no bishop, nor in any intermediate portion of the history any intimation of the creation of such an office, or the appointment of such an officer. If any such were constituted, show us the text, point us to the explicit record, for such, inasmuch as you make it a matter of life or death, you must do. Evolve your proof. Alas, it will not come; the church, and the Apostles, and elders, are all the shape you can possibly make it assume. Was this a church, or was it not? It had no bishop. Yet the Holy Spirit calls it a church. Whom shall we be-

lieve, the Spirit of God, or the traditions and assumptions of diocesan episcopacy ?

#### THE CHURCH AT CESAREA.

Take next, if you please, the church at Cesarea. Compare the passages in which either that church is named, or any hints are given how it might have come into being. Acts viii. 40, Philip stopping at Cesarea in his course of preaching ; Acts xviii. 22, Paul, landing at Cesarea, and saluting the church ; Acts xxi. 8, Philip, the Evangelist, at Cesarea, as at the first. Here, again, is a church without a bishop. You cannot find an intimation of any such officer, of any such office. If you assume or assert that there was, show us the proof ; prove it with as much explicitness as your own unchurching dogma expresses, or you are convicted as arrogant impostors. Here is a church without a bishop, called of God a church. Was it a church, or was it not ?

Take the church at Cenchrea ; Rom. xvi. 1. Take the churches of Syria and Cilicia ; Acts xv. 41. Paul visiting them and confirming their faith. They had no bishop. Were they churches, or were they not ? The Holy Spirit calleth them churches. Take the churches of Galatia ; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, Paul's notice of them. They had no bishop. Yet the Word of God calls them churches. Were they churches, or were they not ?

#### THE CHURCH AT CORINTH.

Take the church of the Corinthians. Was that

also a church, or was it not ? Paul regards it as a church, addresses it as such ; *yet it had no bishop*. The proof in regard to this particular church is overwhelming ; for we have an epistle from Clemens Romanus to the Church at Corinth, in which there is demonstration that their government was, as in the Church at Ephesus, by bishops or elders, and that *they had no diocesan bishop*. The matter is so evident, that episcopal historians themselves argue that it is plain that the episcopal government was not established at Corinth. Now, was this a church, or was it not ? Paul's own superscription to his Epistle is this, *Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth*. It is acknowledged that this was a church without a bishop. Yet the insolent dogma, No bishop, no church, gives the lie to the declaration of the Holy Ghost in regard to it. Shall we believe our inspired Apostle, or the traditions, assumptions, and unchurching dogmas of episcopacy.

#### THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS.

Just so, take the church at Ephesus, Acts xx. 17, and read Paul's final farewell exhortation to the elders of that church. That it was a church without a bishop is as clear from Paul's speech, as that it was a church with elders, as that it was a church at all. Not an individual is alluded to who had any authority whatever over the church, save its elders, and to them Paul committed THE SUPREME CHARGE. It was a church without a bishop. Was it a church, or was it not ? The episcopal assumption saith not. Shall we believe the episcopal assumption, or the declaration of the Holy Ghost ?

## THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH.

Once more, take the church at Antioch, Acts xii. 26. See how it arose, Acts xi. 19, 20, 21. There was, first, the persecution on the death of Stephen, scattering the church which was at Jerusalem, to preach the word. Some of these members of the church, thus scattered abroad preaching, were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came as far as Antioch, and preached to the Grecians there. The hand of the Lord was with them, and many believed. Then the church at Jerusalem, having heard of this; the church, mark you, and no bishop; sent Barnabas, and he came to Antioch; and then Barnabas went to Tarsus, and found Saul, and brought him to Antioch; and "a whole year they assembled themselves with THE CHURCH." Was it a church, or was it not? You cannot here take refuge in the supposition that either Barnabas or Saul were bishops of this diocese; for the inspired record saith, "There were in the church at Antioch *certain prophets and teachers*, among whom were Barnabas and Saul." They were, then, neither of them bishops, and this church at Antioch was a church without a bishop. What becomes of the episcopal assumption here? Will the dogma, No church without a bishop, stand against this express witness of the Holy Spirit?

At an after visit, Paul and Barnabas, separated by the Holy Ghost for this purpose, ordained elders in every church. Take then the churches, when these two men came, ordaining elders in them. Were they churches, or were they not? So far from having a

diocesan bishop, they, as yet, had not even elders. Were they churches, or were they not? You may, perhaps, answer, that the government had not yet been organized. Aye, that is the very point. The passage shows, to demonstration, that even without such organization they were churches of Christ. If I were to hand you a basket of apples, and tell you to cut these apples into exact halves, and then put an artificial stem into each of the halves, and some one should tell you that they were not apples till they were thus halved and stemmed, what should you think of such an argument? The churches were churches before Barnabas and Saul visited them, *just as much as they were afterwards*. Yet, neither before nor after, had they any diocesan bishop. If they had had a bishop, it would have been a curious affair for Paul and Barnabas to take no more notice of him than if he had been a wooden bench in the synagogue. Methinks, if Bishop McIlvaine and Bishop Chase should come into the diocese of New York, and proceed to ordaining elders in every church, they would be very likely to hear from Bishop Onderdonk. And so, if Bishop Barnabas and Bishop Paul came into the diocese of Bishop Diotrephes in Antioch, and without so much as a notice of his existence, proceeded to the work of appointing elders in the churches, they would very likely have heard from Bishop Diotrephes, and we should have heard from him also. There were prophets, teachers, and elders in Antioch, but no diocesan bishops; just as the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch, but not churchmen.

I press this point in reference to the church in Antioch. Before Barnabas and Saul appointed elders, was

that a church, or was it not ? If it was, it was a church without a bishop, for not even elders had been appointed, and a prelatical bishop was a creation of ecclesiastical ambition not yet dreamed of. If it was not, did it become a church on the appointment of elders ? Then also it was a church without a bishop, for neither of these elders was ordained bishop, and neither Barnabas nor Saul had any diocese in those parts, but were simple messengers from the church in Jerusalem.

Here then we set the issue. It is declared in the Word of God, that Barnabas and Saul appointed elders in every church. It is not said, appointed elders to *make* or *gather* a church, but, appointed elders *in* every church ; appointed elders in what already *was* a church. The Holy Ghost then recognizes a church without a bishop, and before the appointment of elders. Let, then, any candid Episcopalian answer the question, Was this a church, or was it not ? If you say it was not, you deny the record that God has given, and charge falsehood on the scriptures. Moreover, if it was not, then, of course, on your own theory it had no bishop. If you say it was, then you convict your own assumption, your own dogma, of falsehood. Or again, if you say it was not, but became a church on the appointment of elders, you again convict your own theory of falsehood, acknowledging a church to be a church without a bishop. The dilemma is inextricable, the case is an entire demonstration.

After this case Barnabas and Saul were sent by the Brethren on a great question to Jerusalem. And when they were come, they were received of the Church and of the Apostles, and Elders. Was it a church by itself,

or was it not ? If all the Apostles and elders had died at once, it would still have remained a church. "It pleased the Apostles and elders, with the whole church." Where was the bishop ? Who was he ? What was his office ? Apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, evangelists, elders, are mentioned as existing and officiating in their respective places in the government of the apostolic church, but never such a creature as a diocesan bishop. You can find no trace of him whatever in the New Testament, nor for more than two hundred years can you find any trace of him at all in the history of Christianity. On the hypothesis that there were diocesan bishops in the New Testament churches, it is a prodigious problem for the advocates of episcopacy to solve, why for the two first centuries of the Christian church the office and the officer should be entirely discontinued. The dogma, no church without a bishop, would unchurch all the churches of the first two hundred years, as well as the non-episcopal churches of the last three hundred.

#### PRELATIONAL MODE OF CREATING AN APOSTLE.

One of the most amusing specimens of the materials, out of which the fabric of Episcopacy is constructed by its advocates, is to be found in their consecration of Epaphroditus as an apostle ! They do this, in order to strain out of the Epistle to the Philippians their three orders in the ministry. Most unfortunately St. Paul superscribes that epistle, To all the saints at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons, but says not a word of any apostle, or diocesan bishop. To get over

this difficulty, they say, that Paul states in the course of the Epistle that Epaphroditus was the Apostle of that church ; thus, in chap. ii. 25, “ Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and companion in labor, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.” To make out the Apostle here, it is necessary first to change the translation of the word messenger, and make it *your Apostle*. Our English translators, not having the fear of a church without a bishop before their eyes, and having a good common sense in their understanding, have given it the right meaning, *messenger*, the only meaning, which, in connection with the context, it will bear. For, by turning to chap. iv. 18, you read thus : “ But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent from you*, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.” Epaphroditus, it is clear, was a messenger from the church of the Philippians to Paul, to carry to him the fruits of their benevolence ; and this verse explains perfectly the sense in which the word messenger must be taken in the former verse, and makes that sense, and none other, necessary. But the advocates of diocesan episcopacy have seized this benevolent errand of Epaphroditus, and exalted him by means of it into the apostleship ! They have smelled in Epaphroditus’ errand the sweet smell of a diocesan bishop, the fragrance of an apostolical diploma.

But who ever heard of the Apostle of a particular church, or where now is the successor of such an officer ? According to this train of argument the agents and treasurers of our modern benevolent societies

are apostles. And if because the word *ἀποστόλος* is here used, you therefore make Epaphroditus an apostle like Paul, then, because the word *διάκονος* is used with regard to our Saviour, it makes him, by the same argument, nothing but a deacon. It is impossible fully to characterize the weakness and puerility of such pretended arguments. Arguments they are not, and they have not ingenuity enough to be dignified with the name of sophistry, which generally possesses some shadow of consistency and plausibility.

It ought to be added that we have also an epistle from Polycarp (living next after the Apostles) to the same church at Philippi, in which, just as in Paul's Epistle, Polycarp speaks of two officers only, the presbyters and deacons, and gives not the most distant allusion to such a creature as a diocesan bishop, not the slightest hint of the existence of any other officer than presbyters and deacons. The idea of Bishop Epaphroditus seems not to have crossed Polycarp's mind ; and as the church at Philippi do not seem to have been sending any messenger with gifts to him, as they had been to Paul, there is no one in his epistle, whom the apostolical successionists can conveniently *Apostolicise*; an omission perfectly unaccountable on their theory. And this church at Philippi is the only one in which they even attempt to show their three orders, doing it in this instance, by the help of Epaphroditus, changing the benevolent scrip, which he bore to Paul, into an apostolical diploma for himself ; the odor of his benevolence, into the insignia of his own apostleship.

Let us suppose that Epaphroditus himself had done this ; that on the ground of his having this errand to

Paul from the church of the Philippians, and having this letter of their benevolence superscribed “*by our messenger, αποστολος, Epaphroditus,*” he had claimed for himself, as is now in some quarters, on the same ground, claimed for him, the rank and authority of an apostle. What would have been his reception by Paul? “Why,” says Epaphroditus, “I am an apostle!” “You an apostle?” says Paul, “I never heard of it before. When did you become one? Who sealed you for this office? Who gave you this commission? Where are the signs of your apostleship? Where are your miracles and proofs of authority?” “Why,” says Epaphroditus, “in this letter from the Philippians. Am I not called their *αποστολος?* And have I not brought to you from them a large supply of money and garments? And is not this the work of an apostle? The seal of mine apostleship is this errand in the Lord; and let me tell you, Master Paul, every good advocate of the Episcopacy will receive it as such; and though you may now reject my claims, yet the time will come, when, on account of this very errand, my name shall be placed with yours, amidst the dignitaries of episcopal authority, in the roll of the Apostles of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

The absurdity of some things is better developed by ridicule than in any other way. I may, therefore, be pardoned the introduction of this dialogue into a grave argument; for it is what might very likely have taken place, had Epaphroditus been so vain a fool as to argue for himself in the way the prelatrical successionists have argued for him.

ASSUMPTION OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF BARNABAS TESTED  
BY THE WORD OF GOD.

The same career of assumption and supposition in place of proof sets down also the name of Barnabas among the Apostles, the object being to gain some ground of authority for the hypothesis that the apostolic dignity was continued by succession, and has passed, in a way of which the successionists do not condescend to inform us, into the lordship of the order of diocesan bishops. The men who reason thus must have been totally unaccustomed to any such searching and comparison of scripture, as would, in the way of the admirable argument in the Horæ Paulinæ, enable them to detect their own errors. Let us test this assertion of Barnabas being an apostle in this way. You have only to compare Acts ix. 26, 27, with Galatians i. 18, 19, and you will find explicit proof amounting, in fact, to an express declaration of Paul, that Barnabas was *not* an apostle. The two passages refer, as will be seen, to the same visit of Paul to Jerusalem from Damascus. In the one of these passages Paul declares that in that visit he saw none of the Apostles save Peter and James. From the other passage it is manifest that he did see Barnabas, who was then "of note among the Apostles," and who, indeed, himself introduced Paul to those apostles whom he did see. Consequently the case is clear that Barnabas was not an apostle. Let us put the two passages in *juxta-position*. The first reads thus: "And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he essayed to join him-

self to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus." The second passage reads thus (Gal. i. 18, 19.), "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother." Fourteen years after, Paul went up to Jerusalem again with Barnabas, and at this time, and on some other occasions, Barnabas was entrusted with errands, which made him a *messenger* of the churches, much in the same way as Epaphroditus was for the church of the Philippians. But if errands of responsibility and trust constituted apostles, then were Judas and Silas, and many others, "our brethren, the messengers of the churches" (2 Cor. viii. 8, 23), apostles also.

SECTARIAN PREJUDICE MUST BE LAID ASIDE IN ORDER TO  
APPEAL TO THE NEW TESTAMENT.

In an appeal to the New Testament, no man can be firm and fearless, who does not divest himself of sectarian prejudices, before he enters that sacred enclosure. If he comes there expecting to find his own *ism*, you need not look to him for frankness and freedom of investigation. He will torture some passages, he will force others, he will add to others, he will take nothing in its plain and simple meaning. And if the

plain and simple meaning be against him, he will keep away as much as possible from the open field of truth, he will run to the Fathers, he will *imbosk*, as Milton says, and you seek in vain to draw him from the wilderness of the Fathers into the simplicity of the scriptures. The adherents of an ecclesiastical system which, like that of episcopacy, came out of Romanism, and not out of the primitive apostolic Christianity, will be especially fond of browsing in those same patristical and traditional pastures, where Romanism has grown corpulent. The Christianity of the New Testament affords too spare a diet for such a scheme. The Christianity of the New Testament is not one of exclusive *isms*; and hence, the more arrogantly any sect *claims* to be, of divine right, the only true church, the less likely it is to be the true church. Hence, while in pursuing the argument through the New Testament you have to confess that, strictly speaking, Congregationalism is not there as a model, inasmuch as it has no elders; nor Independency, because of the same omission; nor Presbyterianism, because its elders are not bishops; least of all is Episcopalianism to be found there, inasmuch as it has three or more orders in the ministry, while the New Testament churches have only one; and its government excludes elders, while in the New Testament churches these invariably were the overseers of the flock. And yet, while the system of Episcopalianism is the widest in its departure from the New Testament model, it is the most sectarian, the most exclusive, the most bigoted of all modern denominations.

It is the only one of all modern denominations,

that refuses to admit other ministers of Christ into its pulpits ; and until some man shall be found in its ranks of sufficient firmness to resist this exclusiveness, the reproach of priority in bigotry must rest upon it. If Dr. Stone or Dr. Milnor should rise superior to this spirit, and in proof of it should say to Dr. Spring or Dr. Skinner, I invite you, as a brother minister of Christ, to a ministerial exchange of our mutual pulpit services on the Sabbath, that would be a happy example of a truly catholic and not bigoted spirit ; it would be the only successful positive denial of the charge of bigotry and exclusiveness ; and it would do more to convince the world that their profession of the gospel is not formalism, but spirit and power, than all other measures that could be taken. “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.”

EPISCOPAL EXCLUSIVENESS PASSING INTO HOSTILITY AGAINST  
MISSIONS WITHOUT EPISCOPACY.

But at present, what is the exhibition made to the world ? Why, that the form is of more importance than the spirit ; and not content with making this impression in Christian lands, it is carried even among the heathen, even into missionary operations, introducing there a disgraceful, undermining rivalry and hostility against those simple-hearted missionaries of the Cross, whose object and business is simply to preach the gospel, and not “ episcopacy, confirmation, and a liturgy.”

The same spirit of bigotry which here asserts that there can be no church without a bishop, denounces, in heathen lands, those who have gone to carry the glad tidings of the gospel without the episcopal *form*, as schismatical, unauthorized intruders into the ministry, as men who have no right to preach, nor to administer the ordinances of the gospel. This is melancholy to the last degree. An episcopal clergyman in Constantinople said to a young pious Armenian, who had been converted by the grace of Christ through the instrumentality of the missionaries of the American Board, "Those men (the American missionaries) may be good men, but they are no priests. I am a priest. But they are no priests, no ministers of Christ." And this injurious, undermining mode of missionary operations is just the legitimate result of the unchurched dogma, which in this country has been proclaimed as the foundation of the Episcopal Church.

Now, God forbid that we should charge this spirit upon all Episcopalians. We know that there are those who mourn over it. There is also a distinction between the laity and the clergy in this matter; and there is a portion of the clergy, who privately abandon the assumptions of the apostolical succession. But when will they publicly and practically disavow and resist them? Until they do this, they are partakers of the sinfulness of this exclusive unchurched spirit, so contrary to the spirit of our Blessed Saviour. Until they do this, they uphold a system, which tends to the destruction of our religious liberty.

## PAPISTICAL NATURE OF THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

Episcopalianism becomes Popery in essence, when it takes to its bosom the Apostolical Succession. Its priests assert that everything is in their hands, that baptism is regeneration, that there is no regeneration without it, and that there is no baptism except *through* a prelatical bishop. If you enter the prison of such a system, it will make you do as it pleases. Its monopoly cannot be broken. You dare not go elsewhere, for salvation is only within its walls. Let its rules be ever so rigid, you are obliged to abide by them ; it may tax you to its heart's content, but if there is no salvation out of its ordinances, what are you to do ? It may take away all your liberties, but if it holds the key of your salvation, you are a helpless victim, and cannot stir. Once give to the system of Episcopalianism the claims which the apostolical successionists are advancing, and you have a perfect Spiritual Despotism, quite as remorseless as Popery itself.

Whether these odious pretensions are rightly attributed to Episcopilians as a body in this country, we do not undertake to decide ; but they *are* the pretensions of those who love the pre-eminence, and who possess it, to a degree, in their conventions, and in their Metropolitan royalties. And those who do not side with these dignitaries, will nevertheless have to bear the reproach of such pretensions, unless they plainly disavow and resist them, and are willing to make some effort to reform their church of them. Whatever persons in the church do not, so far as they may be able, oppose these injurious maxims and prac-

tices, they are themselves partakers in the ungodliness of that zeal which was marked of the Apostle John in the case of “Diotrephes, who loveth the pre-eminence, and casteth us out of the Church;” and as such, Christ will hold them responsible; responsible for holding with a system, which denounces and insults the members of Christ’s own body, responsible for sanctioning the course of those who say to the foot, Because thou art not the hand, therefore thou art not of the body; the course of those, who thus are themselves true schismatics, and are guilty of offending thousands of “little ones who believe in Christ.”

The prophecy of Christ in regard to individuals causing offences, that it were better if a millstone were fastened to the neck of a man “who shall offend one of these little ones who believe in me,” and he were cast into the sea, has been fulfilled in regard to those *systems*, which in like manner offend and persecute those believers in Christ, who choose not their forms. For, with this ambitious, persecuting zeal there have been connected two monstrous errors, namely, that baptism is regeneration, and that communion at the Lord’s Supper is Christianity and Salvation; errors, which will be found at the Day of Judgment to have consigned thousands upon thousands, in that Church, in the security of unpardonable sin, over to its eternal consequences. A man may say, I had rather a thousand times be a dissenter in England, and endure all the chains and persecutions, which might be laid upon me, than take my seat at the Lord’s table in the Establishment, as thousands are doing, with honors heaped upon me, and the millstone about my soul of a baptismal re-

generation, or a Eucharistical salvation. The Establishment of England, in enshrining such errors, is all the while providing for herself the penal retrIBUTions of God, for having cast out and trampled under foot, not only dissenting individuals, but whole denominations of Christians. For, what retribution can be more dreadful, what millstone heavier, what wrath worse to bear, than that of being discovered to have thrown the weight of her own worldliness, magnificence, and zeal, to crush her own members, in sacramental Pharisaism, down to hell !

#### DANGER TO OUR RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES FROM SUCH EXCLUSIVENESS.

And if there were an Episcopalian Establishment in this country, is it not plain, from every indication, that it would follow the same course ? It would be a persecuting Establishment, most dangerous to the liberties of our country. Even Bishop Hopkins, already, has advised an ecclesiastical censorship ; and Bishop Onderdonk has issued his circular, declaring that on the subject of supposed delinquencies in the higher clergy, men must for ever hold their peace, unless they are willing to undergo the delay, the vexation, the expense, of a regular ecclesiastical impeachment and trial, the canons of the Church forbidding a man to say one word of critical opinion even, unfavorable to the line of conduct which the ruling dignitaries may think proper to assume. If such an ecclesiastical establishment should gain the power, then let men see to it, that they stand from before the mouth of such cannon.

They will sweep the freedom of opinion like the artillery of an Austrian despotism.

There is a tendency, in some minds among us, to admire the august display of consolidated unity, pomp, and order, in a combined monarchical and ecclesiastical Establishment like that of Great Britain. Now we make no affectation of patriotism or democracy ; but we hold that loyalty to one's native country is a virtue ; and if we had been born Hottentots, we would shield so far as in us lay, our community of huts from reproach ; and so far as our judgment permitted, we would assert it to be the best community in existence. This is the filial principle of our nature, towards our *mother-land*. But, born as we are under a government which, when rightly administered, is the best in the world, we hold it as poor policy, as it is want of patriotism, to be hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and praising the allied influences of a monarchical and ecclesiastical Establishment.

In paying, in a former lecture, our tribute of admiration to the defenders of religious liberty, in persecuting ages of the world, we ought not to have passed by without special mention of gratitude and love, the great and noble name of Roger Williams, of Rhode Island. Read, in Bancroft's History of the United States, the story of that remarkable man's adventures in the patient pursuit of an asylum of perfect religious liberty, and you will be constrained to acknowledge that he deserves to stand high in the gratitude of his countrymen. You will be ready to admit the justice of Governor Hopkins' declaration, that "Roger Williams justly claims the honor of having been the first legisla-

tor in the world, in its later ages, who fully and effectually provided for and established a full, free, and absolute liberty of conscience.” It was upon such men’s minds, as upon the world’s mountain summits, that the light of that rising sun of liberty first fell, which was to fill the vales with its unclouded purity. And is it not most remarkable, that out of the fires of persecution God should have gathered so many men of this character, men taught the preciousness of religious liberty by their own experience of the bitter arrogance and cruelty of prelatical and unchurched tyranny, to colonize this country, and to build up in it the temple of universal freedom. Is it not most remarkable, that the seed-corn of the population of this country should have been gathered out of the persecuted religionists of so many other countries? To the admirable Huguenots of France we owe as noble a line of descendants, in the stream of our native patriots, as to their brother puritans of England. Our institutions of civil and religious liberty have also received no little portion of their breath of life from the free and hospitable Dutch, who gave our Puritan fathers an asylum from prelatical persecution, and then fled with or followed them into the American wilderness, to build up there the foundations of many generations. We owe almost all our civil and religious liberty, and the support of it through the American Revolution, to the indomitable spirit of men cast out and persecuted by the Established Episcopal Church of England; while, to the supporters, defendants, and descendants of that church, *in its exclusiveness*, we owe almost nothing, but the revival, in this very day, of an unchurched, intolerant

proscription. One of the causes, indeed, of our Revolution itself, was an attempt to set up and enforce an Episcopal Establishment.

The church, from which this proscription comes, is, in its allowance, laying again the foundation of that religious persecution, from which, please God, his own rich grace, and the constitution of government with which he has blessed us, shall ever keep our churches free. But if this proscription in theory is adhered to and defended, it will be no thanks to the Episcopal church in this country that the prisons are not here also opened to nonconformists, and that the stake itself is not erected, with fagots piled around it, and men called dissenters chained within its fires. Already, in the list of their dioceses, the Episcopal bishops range the whole population of every State in the Union as belonging to THE CHURCH.

#### AMUSING FORM OF THE UNCHURCHING EDICT.

The edict, which went forth lately, in the course of this controversy, deliberately unchurching all the churches of Christ that have sprung up for the last three hundred years, was a most singular exhibition of church pride and intolerance. The Quixotic chivalry and absurdity of such a bull of excommunication is more than ever manifest, when you remember that it comes out of a church, which itself was not regarded as a church, even by the Episcopal sect in England, until within a few years ; and that the English church itself is one of those communities that, in her schismatic

separation from the church of Rome, has sprung up within three centuries. We have then the curious spectacle, in this country, of a portion of one of the smallest religious sects in it, legitimatized only within a few years by its foreign parent, that parent being herself a schismatic church three hundred years ago, standing forth before the religious world, and declaring that every church of Christ, besides that one little sect, is no church, but a mushroom schismatical community ! Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Calvinists, Dutch Reformed, German Reformed, Independents, every possible denomination of Christians *out of the Episcopal sect*, are denied the name, essence, and rights of churches of Christ ; and to cover and excuse this exclusion, are branded with the reproach of being *wilfully and knowingly schismatics*, unlawfully baptized ; and if, by any possibility, Christians, yet such only in individual loneliness, and without the sure salvation of the magic of apostolical succession, prelatrical consecration, baptismal regeneration, and Episcopal confirmation. If this be not a ludicrous development of the exhilarating gas in the balloon of hierarchical arrogance, we know not what is. But to crown all, the magnanimous offer is made, if all the churches of the said unhappy flocks of Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and others, should at any time take fire, and burn to the ground, then the said Episcopal sect will, out of compassion to those under God's uncovenanted mercies, open her charitable doors, and even give them that bread and wine, which neither they nor their fathers, for 300 years, ever received lawfully, and which now,

for the first time, being of apostolical succession, can administer nourishment and life to their souls !

Now, in all probability, what would become of our civil and religious liberties, if a party holding such pretensions as these could get the power ? We speak in regard to these pretensions the more unhesitatingly and the more severely, because Episcopal bishops of a large and noble spirit, superior to these lunacies of bigotry, have themselves marked these pretensions for the same scorn. And whatever a portion of the Episcopal clergy in this country may do, the laity will not cease to reject and repudiate those pretensions. They constitute the groundwork of religious persecution, the inoculating *virus* of the plague, the seeds of a harvest of intolerance, if, in a cold climate like ours, a hot-bed of power can be prepared for them.

The principle of intolerance comes from the pride of our nature. A man may really be too pious to indulge pride personally, but put it in the form of a sect, pride of sect, and it begins to wear the appearance of a virtue. Thus this pious man communes with it ; then, in the exaltation of his sect, this master sin of the fallen soul speaks out in bitterness and cruelty to those that differ, that will not conform to that one sect ; and though a man may be a Christian brother, it spurns him as if he were a dog ; it no more regards his feelings than if he were made of wood ; it denies his children Christian burial ; it will martyr him for a cap or a surplice.

#### CANONS OF ARCHBISHOP BANCROFT.

I have asked what would become of our religious  
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liberties, if such men should get the power. I will answer the question by referring you to the church canons prepared by and under that incarnation of hierarchical bigotry, Archbishop Bancroft. The severe sufferings endured by the Puritans under these canons, although unlawfully inflicted, are only the inevitable result of such anathemas in every age, when the ecclesiastical curse is sustained by power. The first canon declares that "whosoever shall affirm that the Church of England by law established is not a true and apostolical church, let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored but only by the Archbishop, after his repentance and public revocation of his wicked error."

CANON IV. Whosoever shall affirm that the form of God's worship in the Church of England established by law and contained in the book of common prayer and administration of sacraments is a corrupt, superstitious and unlawful worship, or contains anything repugnant to scripture, let him be excommunicated, &c.

CANON V. Whosoever shall affirm that any of the thirty-nine articles of the church, agreed upon in the year 1562 for avoiding diversity of opinions, and for establishing consent touching true religion, are in any part superstitious or erroneous, or such as he may not with a good conscience subscribe to, let him be excommunicated, &c.

CANON VI. Whosoever shall affirm that the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England by the law established are wicked, antichristian, superstitious, or such as, being commanded by lawful authority, good men may not with a good conscience approve, or as

occasion requires, subscribe, let him be excommunicated, &c.

CANON VII. Whosoever shall affirm that the government of the Church of England by archbishops, bishops, deans, and archdeacons, and the rest that bear office in the same, is anti-christian or repugnant to the word of God, let him be excommunicated, &c.

CANON VIII. Whosoever shall affirm that the form and manner of making and consecrating bishops, priests, or deacons, contains anything repugnant to the Word of God, or that persons so made and consecrated are not lawfully made, or need any other calling or ordination to their divine offices, let him be excommunicated, &c.

CANON IX. Whosoever shall separate from the communion of the Church of England, as it is approved by the Apostles' rules, and combine together in a new brotherhood, accounting those who conform to the doctrines, rites and ceremonies of the church, unmeet for their communion, let them be excommunicated, &c.

CANON X. Whosoever shall affirm that such ministers as refuse to subscribe to the form and manner of God's worship in the Church of England, and their adherents, may take to themselves truly the name of another church not established by law, and shall publish that their pretended church has groaned under the burden of certain grievances imposed on them by the Church of England, let them be excommunicated, &c.

CANON XI. Whosoever shall affirm that there are within this realm other meetings, assemblies, or congregations of the king's born subjects, than such as are established by law, which may rightly challenge to

themselves the name of true and lawful churches, let him be excommunicated, &c.

Mark this last canon. *No bishop, no church*; no church out of the established church; no church out of the Episcopal church; any person who shall dare assert the contrary, shall be excommunicated.

You see here the iron hand of despotism laid upon all diversity of opinions, that is, upon all liberty of thought in that province, in which, of all others, the soul ought to be most free, the province of religion. But what is most remarkable, you see here the very same odious assertion, only carried a little further out, which has been put forth and reiterated among us, namely, that the Episcopal Church is the only church, and that all other churches are pretended churches, and all other ministers pretended ministers, and to be excommunicated. Let any man read over the Eleventh Canon cited above, and compare it with the recent fulmination in the newspapers, that none of the communities which have sprung up for the last three hundred years out of the Episcopal Church, calling themselves churches, are to be considered as churches, and let him remember the greater light and liberty under which we live, than that which Bancroft enjoyed, and he will at once give the palm of illiberality and bigotry to the modern fulmination; he will say that a spirit which in the United States in this century could entertain a theory of such wholesale exclusiveness, would, in the sixteenth century, have gone farther than Bancroft or Laud himself in the practice of wholesale persecution, and would now be likely, if opportunity offered, again to reduce such theory to such practice.

The theory of these arrogant religionists, the professed disciples of Christ, who deliver over all persons who do not belong to *their* church, to the uncovenanted mercies of God, as out of the Church of Christ, reminds us of the well known blessing, which an extremely orthodox layman used to ask at table; “Lord bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife, us four and no more.” This man was High Church in his benedictions. His theology led him always to remark, whenever the subject of human merit was under consideration, that men deserve simply and only to be born, to die, and to go to hell. There was one good thing in such a theology, namely, that it was universal and not partial, no respecter of persons. But to have such a theology for a particular part, whom your fulminations consign to hell, is indeed monstrous.

Now the theology of Rome says of all dissenters that they are heretics, and deserve simply and only to perish everlasting. They do not deserve to be born, and if Rome could do it, every heretical child would be smothered in infancy. This, too, is the voice of a portion of the Episcopal church, that every person who does not belong to that church, is a schismatic, and accursed. The Romish Church fulminates her thunders loud and clear, Every heretic accursed ! The Established Episcopal Church, which is one of the many religious sects in England, imitates the same thunders, Every dissenter to the uncovenanted mercies of God ! The Episcopal Church, which is an incomparably smaller religious sect in this country, imitates the same thunders, but more feebly. There is no church but our church, nor any regular salvation out of it ! Each of

these sects in turn says of the Pope's bulls, "That's my thunder!" Even in this country, where every Church, Romish, Episcopal, Baptist, Methodist, Congregational, Presbyterian, All, owe their religious liberty, even their liberty to scold at others, to an independent, persecuted, Puritan Church in the wilderness, the word *dissent* has been bandied about, and a faint and feeble imitation of the Established Church of England, in her application of the term *dissenters*, has been attempted! Could anything be more ridiculous? Well do the supporters of such assumptions in a free land like this, deserve to be called the Chinamen of Christendom.

In the intolerance of Rome there is at least the merit of originality; it is likewise on a large scale; there is a certain savage sublimity about it, everything in the extreme, everything furious; fulminating bulls, racks, tortures, fires. In the intolerance and arrogance of a second-hand Episcopal sect, unacknowledged, a year or two ago, even by the English Church, through which they claim parentage, there is such a pitiful imitativeness and inherent weakness, that it moves our shame to notice it. And yet, being suffered to sleep so long time without notice, it has gained a factitious importance, and having been developed even in the missionary field, it shows a most dangerous and oppressive tendency, which makes it necessary now to expose both its ludicrous folly and its melancholy wickedness. It is but an off-shoot of the system which forms the subject of these lectures, The Hierarchical Despotism.

## NECESSITY OF RESISTING THIS DESPOTISM.

The spirit of this despotism it is the duty of every Christian to resist ; and that, not merely because such a despotism is subversive of the rights of every individual disciple of Christ, but because the truth and vitality of the gospel cannot stand along with it. Thus Paul speaks of those “ false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage : to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour ; THAT THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL MIGHT CONTINUE WITH YOU.” If the truth of the gospel is to continue, such bondage *must* be resisted ; but if the gospel must be given up, if such bondage *must* be endured, there are many who would prefer undisguised Popery to the lordship of diocesan episcopacy. If we are to worship the sign of the beast, let us have him *in puris naturalibus*, and we shall know better how to deal with him.

From the beast *in puris naturalibus*, from the Anti-Christian Church of Rome, as in her blackest corruption the only representative of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth, prelacy traces her descent and authority. “ She boasts,” says the author of *The Primitive Church*, “ her ordinances, her sacraments, transmitted for a thousand years, unimpaired, uncontaminated, through such hands ! High Church Episcopacy proudly draws her own apostolical succession through this pit of pollution, and then the followers of Christ, who care not to receive such grace from such hands, she calmly de-

livers over to God's uncovenanted mercies! Nay more, multitudes of this communion are now engaged in the strange work of 'unprotestantizing the churches' which have washed themselves from these defilements. The strife is, with a proud array of talents, of learning, and of episcopal power, to bury all spiritual religion again in the grave of forms, to shroud the light of truth in the darkness of popish tradition, and to sink the church of God once more into that abyss of deep and dreadful darkness from which she emerged at the dawn of the Reformation. In the beautiful and expressive language of Milton, their strife is to 're-involve us in that pitchy cloud of infernal darkness where we shall never more see the sun of truth again, never hope for the cheerful dawn, never more hear the bird of morning sing.'"

I have spoken already at large on the intimate connection between our religious and civil liberties. One of the objections powerfully urged against episcopacy in the unanswerable work of Mr. Coleman on *The Primitive Church*, is its monarchical and anti-republican tendency. On the other hand, the system of religion in the New Testament "harmonizes with and fosters our free institutions."

"There is a harmony between government and religion. There is a mutual relation and adaptation between our free, republican government, and a popular ecclesiastical organization, like that of the apostolical and primitive church. Such a system harmonizes with our partialities and prejudices; it coincides with our national usages; it is congenial to all our civil institutions. This is a consideration of great importance."

is enough of itself to outweigh, a thousand fold, all that prelacy ever dreamed of in its own favor. Indeed, the spiritual despotism of that system, its absolute monarchical powers, constitute one strong objection to it. It is the religion of despots and tyrants. Such the papal form of it has always been ; and such, we cannot doubt, is still one inherent characteristic of high, exclusive Episcopacy, however it may be modified by circumstances. The Church of England, from the time of its establishment, says Macaulay, ‘continued to be, for more than one hundred and fifty years, the servile handmaid of monarchy, the steady enemy of public liberty.’ James, the tyrant of that age, uniformly silenced every plea in behalf of the Puritans, with the significant exclamation, ‘No bishop, no king.’ So indispensable is the hierarchy to a monarchy. But in a free republic it is a monstrous anomaly.”

The exclusive, intolerant spirit of Episcopacy is justly regarded by this writer as one of its most obnoxious characteristics. “That this single church,” he says, “should assume to be the only true church, and its clergy the only authorized ministers; that the only valid ordinances and sacraments are administered in their communion; that they alone of all to whom salvation by grace is so freely published, are received into covenant mercy,—all this appears to us as nothing else than a proud and sanctimonious self-righteousness, which we can only regard with unmixed abhorrence. There is an atrocity of character in this spirit, which can unchurch the saints of God of every age, in every Christian communion save one, and consign them, if not to perdition, to God’s

uncovenanted mercies ;—in all this there is an atrocity of character, which, in other days, has found, as it seems to us, its just expression in the fires of Smith-field, and in the slow torture of the *auto-da-fé*. Episcopacy holds no fellowship, no communion with us,—*dis-senters*. ‘The Episcopal church, deriving its episcopal power in regular succession from the holy Apostles, through the venerable church of England,’ makes public declaration, through its bishops, that it has ‘no ecclesiastical connection with the followers of Luther and Calvin.’ Be it so. To all this we have no right to object. But we have a right to our own conclusions respecting the exclusiveness of such a religion.

“It is also the same spirit for which high-church episcopacy has ever been so much distinguished,—that is, unmitigated hatred of the religion of the Puritans. ‘Laud and his party began, about the end of Elizabeth’s reign, by preaching the divine right, as it is called, or absolute indispensability of episcopacy ; a doctrine, of which the first traces, as I apprehend, are found about the end of Elizabeth’s reign. They insisted on the necessity of episcopal succession, regularly derived from the Apostles. They drew an inference from this tenet, that ordination by presbyters was, in all cases, null.’ Of Lutherans and Calvinists, they began now to speak, as aliens, to whom they were not at all related, and schismatics, with whom they held no communion ; nay, as wanting the very essence of Christian society.”

Precisely this intolerance of the age of Laud is now exhibited in theory, and, so far as there is power and opportunity, carried out in practice, at this very day,

by the Apostolical Successionists in the Episcopal church. On missionary ground it is enacted by instruction and authority, in the name of the whole Episcopal denomination ; and as noble a band of missionaries as the world has ever seen since the days of the Apostles—a band of men who had occupied the untrodden missionary field near twenty years before the Episcopal church in this country had a single missionary in the world,—are denounced by the bishop of that church as schismatics, and unauthorized intruders into the work of the ministry.

## CONCLUSION.

It is painful to be compelled to say these things. Infinitely rather, if episcopalian exclusiveness permitted it, would we be found praising the missionary zeal of the sect that unchurches all other sect sin Christendom ; infinitely rather would we unite with them, as mutual Christians ought to do, in spreading the gospel of our Lord and Saviour. Thank God, a time is coming, when this bitter, poisonous leaven of spiritual pride and despotism shall be overcome by love ; when this arrogant assumption of being the only true church shall be chased out of the world, to the place that it belongs to. It is the very spirit of him who said,

Better to reign in hell, than serve in Heaven !

And except this pride give way to charity, then, even in heathen lands, will Christian sects build up an arena to fight out the stormy conflicts that disgrace their Christianity at home. And as in the very presence of

the Saviour, but a few hours before his death, there was a strife among his disciples who should be the greatest, so now, in the most sacred place of his service on earth, amidst perishing unbelievers in the darkness of idolatry, will this unchurched spirit fight, as a frightful spectacle to angels and to men, against those who choose not to range themselves under the banners of “ episcopacy, confirmation, and a liturgy !” There can be no peace or charity, along with the “ curst ungodliness ” of such zeal ; and we may rest assured that except God cast out this devil of intolerance from our system, we are not the people whom he can use to spread the gospel of Christ through the world. In the name of a world lying in wickedness, and demanding all our united efforts to save it ; in the name of Him, who, though he was Lord of all, became the servant of all, that he might bring us as freemen to God ; in the name of that humility and gentleness, of which he set us all such an example, when he, our Lord and Master, washed his disciples’ feet ; let us, in ourselves and in others, put this wicked intolerance away from us with sorrow and shame ; let us crucify that spirit, which so crucifies the Saviour. “ For now abideth FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY, these three ; but the greatest of these is CHARITY.”

*ΘΕΩ ΜΟΝΩ ΔΟΞΑ !*



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